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Admiral C. C. Penrose Fitzgerald.

FROM SAIL TO STEAM

NAVAL RECOLLECTIONS, 1878–1905

BY

ADMIRAL C. C. PENROSE FITZGERALD

AUTHOR OF "MEMORIES OF THE SEA"

ILLUSTRATED

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PREFACE

THE meeting of an old friend is always a pleasant incident in our lives, and I make bold to assume that you who are now reading these words have previously read my "Memories of the Sea," and that you are therefore not loth to renew our previous acquaintance, nor to listen patiently to some more stories of life in the Navy in the last century. I trust, therefore, that I succeeded in entertaining, or perhaps amusing, you on a former occasion, and that I may claim you as an old friend who will indulgently accompany me upon a few more cruises, in Her Majesty's ships, to various quarters of the globe, to show the flag, police the seas, and maintain that very real but rather indescribable thing we call British prestige.

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FROM SAIL TO STEAM

CHAPTER I

H.M.S. "RAPID" AT CORFU

THE reader will perhaps remember that when I said farewell, or rather au revoir, with the promise to go on if I received encouragement, I had gone on shore from H.M.S. *Asia*, had tried to break my neck in the hunting-field, got concussion of the spine and spent a year on the flat of my back, suffering a good deal, though slowly recovering; and, indeed, I had good reason to be thankful that I was not paralyzed for life, as I was threatened with this for several months.

At the end of a year the doctors told me I might go to sea again, so I applied to the Admiralty for an appointment; and as my old friend Lord Clanwilliam was at that time a Lord of the Admiralty, he got me appointed to the command of the *Rapid* in the Mediterranean, the commander of that ship (C. Drummond) having been promoted.

The *Rapid* was my first independent command, and a very delightful command she was. She was the slowest ship on the station—too slow to keep up with the fleet and too slow to carry mails or despatches; so that I was always on detached service and very much my own master. I was fourteen months on the station before I ever met the Admiral (Sir Geoffrey Hornby),

though, of course, I was in frequent communication with him—but that was a very different thing from being always under his eye, for when the cat's away the mice can play.

It must be admitted that we were not quite so strenuous in the Navy thirty-five years ago as we are to-day. We took matters easier. Our naval supremacy had not been seriously threatened since Trafalgar, and we were resting on our laurels, or rather on the laurels of our forefathers—a condition of affairs which is apt to make people sleepy and indifferent and over-confident. Competition and opposition are good for all of us; they are the very salt of life, without which we should soon get rotten. So that it is perhaps a blessing in disguise that we should now find ourselves boldly challenged to make good our claim to rule the waves, though it is perhaps not altogether a good sign that we should see a successor of Lord St. Vincent go whining, hat in hand, to the challenger, begging him to desist, and thus save us from the expense of insuring our wealth and our national independence. But at the time of which I am writing no ambitious potentate had stretched forth his hand to seize Neptune's trident and wrest it from our grasp. So we just jogged along comfortably, taking things easy, not paying much attention to gunnery or fighting efficiency of any sort, though we still kept up the good old tradition of making our men sailors by giving them plenty of exercise at sail drill and making our passages under sail whenever it was possible to do so; for "saving coal" was still the order of the day and the order of the Admiralty too, and this last was a matter of great importance to a commander expecting and hoping for his promotion. The *Rapid* was a slightly enlarged *Cordelia*, of which ship I gave a description

in my former volume; but instead of being now a baby corvette, fully rigged and carrying eleven guns, she had lately been transformed into a sort of glorified gun-boat: her rig altered to that of a barque and her guns reduced from eleven to three, one of these being a 7½ ton muzzle-loader and the other two 40-pounder Armstrong breech-loaders—what the sailors used to call "two-muzzled guns, what shoots inboard." And this they not uncommonly did, killing or wounding some of their crew. In fact, I have very little doubt that if a true record could be obtained of the execution done by the so-called Armstrong gun, with its lively breech-block, it would be found to be on the wrong side of the balance-sheet—killed more friends than foes, like the modern revolver.

Be that as it may, and with all respect to the great Elswick firm, it cannot be denied that the Armstrong gun of the period was a dangerous and inefficient weapon, and far behind the French breech-loading gun of the same date.

This fact was fully recognized by our naval ordnance people; yet, instead of developing an efficient breech-loading weapon, they clung to muzzle-loaders for many years after other nations had discarded them; so that as late as well on into the last decade of the century we had in commission that interesting naval curiosity the *Inflexible*, with her four 80 ton muzzle-loading guns, her 24 inches of armour over a small patch amidships, and two-thirds of her sides and waterline open to be riddled by the smallest guns afloat.

But to return to the *Rapid*. Her one more or less efficient gun was a 7½ ton muzzle-loader, mounted amidships and supposed to fire on either broadside; but the spare topmast was stowed right across the port on

the port side, so that the gun could only be fired on the starboard side. This I altered directly I joined, as I thought an enemy might possibly come up on the port side, and that in this case a gun would be more useful than a spare topmast.

The above would appear to be somewhat in the nature of an unkind reflection cast upon the memory of my numerous predecessors who had commanded the *Rapid*. It is not so intended, but is merely quoted with the object of showing that at this period we were not quite so strenuous in seeking fighting efficiency in the Navy as our successors are to-day. We had, it must be confessed, relapsed into a sort of *dolce far niente* condition; due no doubt to the absence of that serious rivalry and competition which are, as I have before remarked, the very salt of life.

I joined the *Rapid* at Corfu in January, 1878. This was only a few years after Mr. Gladstone had made Corfu a present to the Greeks, withdrawn the British troops, and blown up the fortifications which had cost Great Britain more than two millions of money. It was very generous of Mr. Gladstone, who, it was said, had been reading Homer.

It was at the request of Austria that the fortifications of Corfu were demolished. The Austrians no doubt had visions of some future Agamemnon and Achilles making Corfu their base of operations for the siege of Trieste. At any rate, it is in accordance with the custom of civilized Powers (International Law, as it is vaguely termed) to demolish your fortifications when you abandon a position to other people who may be less friendly to the neighbours than you have been. So up went two millions of British gold, in a fit of altruistic generosity.

Liberal Governments have a way of being very liberal with other people's gear.

When I arrived at Corfu in January, 1878, the Corfiotes were feeling acutely the economic depression caused by the withdrawal of the British troops and the transference to the Greek government of their beautiful island. The good roads made by the British had already fallen into a state of disrepair. Business in the towns was very slack; in fact, the grass had begun to grow in some of the streets. The country people complained that there was no market for their produce, and Wolfe the saddler remarked to me that there were not quite so many English sovereigns knocking about as there used to be. But they had Home Rule, and some of them pretended to like it.

In the days of the British protectorate of the Ionian Islands, Corfu had been known as "the soldiers' paradise." The regiments and the gunners that got a couple of years there were the envy of all their comrades; and it certainly was a very delightful station, especially during the winter months, when the climate is neither too hot nor too cold, and the best woodcock-shooting in the world is only five miles off—just across the bay.

Truly the glory of Corfu had departed. There had been a Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, who lived in a palace overlooking the anchorage. But that office, once held by Mr. Gladstone, had been abolished and the palace was empty, swept and garnished.

The first time our Consul visited the ship he received a salute of seven guns. He looked sad and crestfallen, and told me that when he was Commissioner of one of the other islands—I think Santa Maura—he had been

accustomed to receive a salute of fifteen guns, and that it was a great come down. I agreed with him, but assured him that the regulations were very strict, and that I could not possibly give him more than seven. He sighed and said he knew it, and went on shore again.

It has occasionally struck me that Consuls, though nearly always civilians, are very fond of guns.

I had not been many days at Corfu before I took a trip to the happy hunting-grounds of Albania, on the opposite side of the bay—the first of many trips, which were attended with varying success, amongst the woodcock, the snipe, and the pigs.

On the Albanian coast opposite to Corfu Island there are several beautifully snug little harbours—not exactly ship harbours, but perfect for small vessels and yachts; and in the days of the British occupation there were about a dozen small yachts for hire, exactly suited for these little harbours, where they could lie sheltered from all winds while the lucky British soldiers of the Corfu garrison landed to shoot woodcock, and returned on board at sunset to dine and sleep.

The woodcock-shooting in Albania is perhaps the best in the world. The snipe-shooting in the marshes is also very good; and these two sports can be varied with "pigging," or wild-boar-shooting, which under some circumstances is rather exciting, though, on the other hand, it becomes monotonous when the pigs won't bolt, or bolt the wrong way. The country is far too rough and hilly to ride after them and stick them as they do in India, so the only way to get them is to shoot them as they do in Germany.

There is always a chance of a wounded boar charging, which adds something to the excitement of the sport.

BATTERY POINT, CORFU.

From a sketch by the author.

I was never charged myself, though on one occasion one of my boat's crew, who were beating for me, was charged and badly ripped in the thigh by a boar which had not only not been wounded, but had not even been fired at, or even previously seen by either the beaters or the shooters; but this happened in Northern Syria and not in Albania.

I always used my double-barrelled shot-gun, with spherical bullets, for pigging. Some people used rifles, but they rarely hit a pig. Most of the shots one got were under fifty yards. It was not stalking, as you very seldom saw the pig until he bolted from the cover at full speed, sometimes within four or five yards of you; so that you had a much better chance of hitting him with your number twelve bore fowling-piece you were accustomed to shoot with, than with a rifle which you were not accustomed to—at least, I found it so.

It was something like rabbit-shooting on a big scale, with a chance of the rabbit charging.

The pigs were excellent eating, like venison, and not a bit like tame pork.

The first time I went pigging in Albania I got a shot at a running boar, at about fifty yards, and hit him, but too far back, breaking his near hind-leg. He did not charge, but made off, and my coxswain and I gave chase. At first we gained a little on him, and I fired several end-on shots, but he was dodging amongst bushes, and I never hit him again. The trail, however, showed so much blood that we thought he would soon weaken and get slower or stop, and that we should come up to him and finish him; but the ground was very rough, and it soon became obvious that the pig was better on three legs than we were on two, and was rapidly leaving us; so with a parting shot at about

one hundred yards, we sat down, thoroughly blown, and watched him. He had now got into fairly open country, and we could see him going as straight as a line for a hill about a mile off, upon which we observed another pigging party with their beaters, apparently having lunch. We shouted for all we were worth, to warn them that the wounded pig was going straight for them, and they evidently heard our yell, though probably not the purport of it.

We could still see the pig at intervals amongst the scrub, and he kept a perfectly straight course, as if he had been steering by compass, until he got right in amongst the luncheon-party, and then there was great commotion and a rapid succession of shots.

My coxswain and I were very tired and hungry, and our luncheon was a long way off in the other direction, so we did not cross the valley to see what had happened; but two days afterwards, on my return to Corfu, I found out that the party we were watching, and who had finished my wounded pig, consisted of an English lunatic and his doctor, who were staying at an hotel in Corfu, and had gone over to Albania on a pigging expedition the same day that I had gone.

I called on the lunatic and his doctor, and suggested that I was entitled to a portion of the pig, as they certainly would never have got him if I had not wounded him first and then warned them that he was coming in amongst them. The doctor agreed with me in principle, but said they had already eaten the pig; and the lunatic offered me the skin, which I declined.

The lunatic was only a monomaniac, and quite sane upon all subjects save one. It was a very strange form of monomania, and one I have never heard of before or since.

If anyone looked straight at him and at the same time happened to cough, he conceived that he was being accused of a horrible and unnatural crime, and went for the accuser with great fury and without more ado, no matter where or when. So that the doctor had rather a ticklish business in hand, as he had not only to warn strangers, but also to look out to try and stop the assault, should anyone be so unfortunate as to give the unintentional offence.

I dined at the hotel one night, where there were a good many guests, as I was rather curious to see a demonstration of this peculiar form of monomania; but the guests had probably all been warned by the doctor, and nothing happened. I did not feel disposed to try the experiment myself, as there were a lot of knives on the table, and the doctor was on the offside.

I had not been long in command of the *Rapid* at Corfu before my friend the Consul informed me that he had received reliable information that two Christian villages on the Albanian coast, opposite to the northern part of Corfu Islands, were expecting a visit from a battalion of Turkish irregular troops, to punish the inhabitants for something they had done to offend the Turkish Government.

"It is quite possible," said the Consul, "that these villages may have been rebellious and insubordinate; but when irregular Mahomedan troops are sent to punish Christian villages, it generally comes rather hard upon the women and children."

The Consul added that he had received urgent requests from the head-men and the priests of both the villages (Tre Scogli and Santa Quaranta) imploring him to get the women and children taken across the water to their co-religionists in Corfu before the Turkish

troops arrived, else there would probably be a wholesale massacre of the women, or worse; and he asked me if I would go over in the *Rapid* and fetch them, as there was no time to lose and no merchant vessels he could hire or charter for the job.

I felt rather puzzled at the request, and not at all sure whether I should be justified in offering sanctuary in one of Her Majesty's ships to anyone save bona-fide British subjects; but as there was no time to ask my Admiral (at Malta) for instructions, and the matter was urgent, I thought of a motto taught me by one of my old Captains: "When in doubt, act first, and ask leave afterwards." So over I went in the *Rapid* into Turkish territory, and brought over to Corfu about one hundred and eighty women and children and a few very old and infirm men from the two threatened villages. We had to make two trips to do it, as the poor wretches naturally wanted to save and bring with them whatever they could hastily pack and get our men to bring off for them.

It was indeed a pitiful sight to see these poor people torn suddenly from their homes, struggling to save some of their very modest possessions—bedding, clothes, pots and pans, cheap and gaudy sacred pictures, even children's toys; but they knew too well what was in store for them if they did not escape before the punitive expedition from Scutari came down upon them.

A few days after I had landed the refugees at Corfu the avenging Turk came down and burnt both villages; and more than a year afterwards the homeless Epiriotes were still leading a wretched life in the town of Corfu, almost entirely dependent on charity.

There were very eulogistic articles in the Corfu newspapers about "the historic *Rapid*, her noble crew and

gallant commander," etc., who rescued these unfortunate people from almost certain death, and I felt rather proud of myself; but pride goeth before a fall, and I still felt a little bit anxious as to what my Admiral would say about my proceedings.

I had not long to wait, for by return of post from Malta I received the following memorandum from Admiral Hornby, who was at that time Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean:

"I have received your letter No. 5, of the 4th inst., reporting your proceedings and acquainting me that you had embarked and conveyed to Corfu certain men, women, and children from the ports of Tre Scogli and Santa Quaranta on the Albanian coast. In reply I have to point out to you that I do not consider your instructions in any way authorize you to receive on board such persons, not being British subjects. . . . On the ground of humanity the removal of women and children from the actual scene of fighting would be permissible, but even in that case they should not be landed in a country not their own. . . . In the instances you report it appears to me that granting the people you did a passage was a misuse of one of Her Majesty's ships, and tended to encourage hostilities, by the removal from danger of the wives and families of men at a time when their continued presence would probably have deterred such men from committing excesses and from resisting lawful authority by force of arms.

"I shall forward a copy of this memorandum to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, with your report of proceedings."

This was rather a damper to the ambitions of a commander expecting his promotion, and caused me to take a gloomy view of my future prospects, until, about a month afterwards, I received another memorandum from my Admiral, to the effect that—

"The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have informed me that, as you embarked fugitives on board the *Rapid* by the advice of Her Majesty's Consul at Corfu, and your proceedings have been approved by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, their Lordships are not prepared to withhold their approval of your proceedings—although not enjoined by your instructions—as it appears what you did was justifiable as a measure of humanity."

It did not strike me that "not prepared to withhold their approval" was a very gracious way of expressing their approval on the part of the Admiralty; but that, of course, is a mere matter of taste, and it was enough for me to know that I had not done anything which would be likely to block my promotion.

In 1878 there were still a good many English living in the town of Corfu; they were mostly business people who had established themselves there during the palmy days of the British occupation of the Ionian Islands, and having made their homes there, they did not leave when the islands were handed over to the Greek Government. The British community was, however, a rapidly dwindling one, as there was the natural wastage, and no fresh supply coming in to fill up the gaps. An English episcopal church still flourished, more or less, with a parson paid by either the Foreign or Colonial Offices—I am not sure which. The said parson, a fiery Welshman, was in the habit of preaching inordinately long sermons, which bored and irritated his congregation. They had frequently remonstrated with him and begged him to spare them, but entirely without any result, and they had always been worsted in their encounters and forced to retreat, baffled and discomforted; for their pastor told them (perhaps truly)

that he knew much better what was good for them than they did themselves.

These peaceful and innocent-looking people entered into a conspiracy and formed a plot, in which they assigned to me the rôle of Archibald Bell-the-Cat; for, as a matter of fact, they were all very much afraid of the fiery Welshman, and were particularly anxious that I should tackle him on the subject of his long sermons.

And this was how it was managed: As the *Rapid* did not carry a chaplain, I was in the habit of sending those of the crew who belonged to the Church of England to the English church, and of going myself; but the poor, tired sailors found it impossible to keep awake during the sermon no matter how loudly the impassioned orator threatened and thundered; and I had seen whole benches of them fast asleep long before the oration was finished.

Here, then, was a handle for a remonstrance against the long sermons — at least, so we thought, and I, nothing loth, joined the conspiracy. Some of my friends came on board the *Rapid* to consult, and to their great joy, I wrote an extremely polite letter to the parson, pointing out how very glad I was to avail myself of the privilege of sending my men to his church; but that, unfortunately, I had noticed that most of them went to sleep during the sermon, which was not seemly on their part nor creditable to the intelligence of British seamen; and I further added that after many years' experience of sailors I found that they never could keep awake during any sermon which lasted more than ten minutes. If, therefore, he could manage to curtail his sermons to about that length, I should be glad to continue to avail myself of the privilege of sending my men to his church; but that, if not, I was afraid I should have to discontinue doing so.

I thought it was a very polite and inoffensive letter. But not so the fiery Welshman, who came on board next day in a towering rage, and sought an interview with me. He did not swear—parsons don't swear—but he cussed majestically. I am not sure that he did not threaten to excommunicate me, or at any rate to get the Pope or somebody else to do so. He would report me to Lord Salisbury (the Foreign Secretary) for interfering with his clerical duties and dictating to him as to what length his sermons ought to be. I had insulted him by implying that he was unable to keep British seamen awake. To which I replied that I found it difficult to do so myself when I only read the prayers on Sunday morning, without any sermon at all. I told him that our men had been taught to regard Sunday as a day of rest, and that they always followed that rule, adding, *sotto voce*, "When we let 'em." I told him, further, that the days had long gone by when the sailor's eleventh commandment was in vogue—"Six days thou shalt labour and do all that thou art able, and on the seventh thou shalt holystone the deck and scrub the cable."

But so far from this pacifying him, it only made him worse. He said I was chaffing him, and he finally went on shore and had interviews with some of the leading members of his congregation.

What specially riled him was that he knew it was a put-up job, and that I was merely the stalking-horse, selected to bell the cat—and a very fierce cat he was. The total result, however, was quite satisfactory, and the sermons were very much curtailed.

I had already remarked that the woodcock-shooting in Albania is about the best in the world, and I made the most of it during the winter of 1877–78. Our

cruising ground extended from Corfu to Antivari, and included Avlona, Durazzo, San Giovanni di Medua; and several other happy hunting-grounds, which have lately become famous for other shooting than woodcock-shooting; and I fear that the woodcock, the snipe, and even the gallant wild boar, must have been very much scared by recent events at and around the above-named places.* But in 1878 there was nothing to disturb this quiet coast, beyond occasional raids on Christian villages by Turkish regulars or irregulars, and there was good woodcock-shooting all along the coast, wherever there were suitable covers. San Giovanni di Medua was a particularly delightful place. There you could shoot a woodcock directly you landed from your boat, as the covers came right down to the water's edge.

While I am talking of sport, and particularly of shooting, it occurs to me that the reader may perhaps think we have nothing else to do in the Navy save to amuse ourselves. Several books of naval reminiscences have appeared lately which might naturally give rise to this idea, notably those by Admiral Sir William Kennedy and Sir Robert Harris, which are very largely devoted to descriptions of sport in various parts of the world; but it would be a great mistake to suppose that we have nothing else to do, or even that shooting occupied any large proportion of our time. The explanation is that we naturally dwell upon the pleasant incidents in our naval careers, and skip over and try to forget the unpleasant ones.

It would not interest the reader to hear of the monotony of being becalmed at sea (none of this in the present day), nor of the weary months we sometimes had to spend at some God-forsaken place where some

* Written at the time of the second Balkan War.

shadowy British interests were supposed to require the presence of a man-of-war. Were we to dwell upon these things and write lugubrious lamentations of the misery we endured, it would sound like grumbling, and it is well known that sailors *never* grumble—or hardly ever.

I shot my first pig at Avlona, a very fine animal, whose tusks now adorn the wall of my study.

Albania is a wild and rough country, vast tracts of the extensive foot-hills being covered with scrub, mainly that of the dwarf oak, which shrub supplies the commercial article known as "valonia," largely imported into England for tanning, dyeing, and making ink. It takes its name from Avlona, and the article, as exported, consists of the cups of the acorns of the dwarf oak; the acorns themselves are left for the wild boar out of the woods, who thrives well upon them.

Interspersed amongst the oak scrub there are tracts of coarse grass, upon which the wild-looking, petticoated Albanian shepherds feed their flocks, closely guarded by those splendid and courageous animals the Molossian dogs, which fiercely resent the intrusion of all strangers and occasionally become extremely troublesome, attacking at close quarters until their masters call them off.

We always found these Albanians very friendly, and we could generally manage to engage half a dozen of them to act as beaters for either pigs or woodcock, and they did not expect a large remuneration; a plug of ship's tobacco was more acceptable than money. For scaring the pigs and driving them from cover they used a curious implement which made a weird and unearthly noise; it was composed of the dried shell of a gourd and a piece of waxed string, which they pulled through their fingers, making a strange noise, the like of which

I never heard before. But the best of all the beaters for pigs was the marine bugler. I found that he was getting fat, from want of exercise, and that he also wanted practice; so he joined the beaters, and when he sounded the light-infantry calls on his bugle amongst the wild valleys of the Albanian foot-hills, the pigs put back their ears and bolted like rabbits from the other end of the cover, where the guns had been previously placed. Thus we got some very pretty running shots; not by any means easy, for a wild pig can go at a great pace, and there is always a chance that he may charge, especially if wounded.

Considering the great part which the Island of Corfu (Corcyra) played in ancient history, it does not contain so many remains of antiquity as one would have expected, though it appears that the Kaiser has lately been digging with some success. The soil is fertile, but the Corfiot peasantry are reputed to be the idlest of all the Ionians. Oil, wine, and garlic are the principal products. The olive-tree requires but little attention or cultivation. A dead donkey, buried at the roots, is said to be the best manure, and failing this, rags from the Jewish quarter, which, no doubt, give a fine flavour to the oil. Some attention and some labour have to be expended on the vineyards, but this is so carelessly done that the wine produced has no reputation, and does not leave the island; and as to the garlic, to judge by the smell of the people, it is of first-rate quality and very strong.

Those who have travelled in the East need not be reminded of the smell of "eaten" garlic; but if they have not walked through the streets of Corfu city on the evening of one of the numerous feast-days, they have not known it at the summit of its power.

CHAPTER II

IN THE LEVANT

In the autumn of 1878 the *Rapid* was ordered to Malta for her annual refit, and I was then informed by that best of all Admirals, the late Sir Geoffrey Hornby, that he intended to send me to the coast of Syria for the winter. Visions of sport!

I had heard many tales of the happy hunting-grounds on the coast of Syria. Perhaps they were not all true, yet there must be some foundation for them, and the sequel proved that there was, and a very solid foundation too.

I should be "senior officer"; for although I was only a commander, and there were many ships in the Mediterranean commanded by Post-Captains, none of these would be on the Syrian branch of the station during the winter; so that I should be in the enviable position of having no one to give me orders nearer than my Admiral, who would probably spend most of the winter at Malta.

The prospect was rosy in the extreme; and although we sailors frequently find our best-laid schemes frustrated by the so-called "exigencies of the Service," I thought there was sufficient probability of the Syrian cruise coming off, to justify me in inviting my old friend R. W. Mirehouse to come out from England and spend a few months with me on board the *Rapid*, and take his chance of getting some rough shooting; and he, being

a thorough sportsman, came out as soon as possible and joined me at Beyrout.

The Captain of a man-of-war is undoubtedly in a proud position. He is an absolute monarch in his own little kingdom; yet the position has its drawbacks, and the greatest of these is that he is obliged to mess alone. He, of course, occasionally has a small dinner-party, and asks two or three of his officers to dine with him, and also he occasionally dines with them in the wardroom; but as a general rule he sits down alone to his three meals a day, and this is rather trying to some people, especially to those who love talking and are fond of the sound of their own voice. The solitary meals sometimes become very depressing, and are bad for the digestion.

Solitary confinement, with the chance of being drowned, as some sage—was it not Dr. Johnson?—described life at sea.

It was therefore with unfeigned delight that I heard my old and tried friend was coming out to join me and be my messmate and shooting companion at the happy hunting-grounds which I hoped to visit during the winter of 1878–79, on the coast of Syria. For although I had a charming set of officers in the *Rapid*, and was on the best of terms with them, they were all, without exception, uncommon bad shots, and it was rather irritating to see them blazing away all day at snipe and woodcock, or even at pigs quite close to them, and never hitting anything.

My first port of call on my new station was Beyrout, where there was a British Consul-General, a very grand man, who somehow had got it into his head that I was under his orders, and that he could order me about wherever he thought proper—a strange delusion, con-

cerning which I had to undeceive him. It appeared that my predecessor had rather encouraged this absurd idea, which was decidedly weak on his part.

On one occasion I applied to my friend the Consul-General about some trouble there was on board a British merchant steamer which was lying at the anchorage; but was loftily informed that, "My Vice-Consul attends to these matters. My business is entirely diplomatic." So I pocketed my pride and went to the Vice-Consul.

It is not at all uncommon to find British Consuls—and especially Consuls-General—somewhat haughty and ashamed of their own proper job. They often have an ambitious and anxious eye on the diplomatic service, which they consider much grander and more important. Some few succeed in getting transferred, and no doubt some specially selected ones make good diplomats. At any rate a good many of them think it worth trying for.

The coast of Syria is the most interesting station—quite apart from sport—that I have ever had the luck to be stationed on. It is not necessary to be a learned antiquary in order to take an interest in such places as Jerusalem, Damascus, Tyre, Sidon, Antioch, Mount Carmel, and Baalbec, all of which I was able to visit; and although the glory of them has departed, it is still possible to give free scope to one's imagination, and picture in the mind what they must have been in the day of their pride.

As to Tyre and Sidon, this is somewhat difficult, as there is scarcely a trace left of their ancient grandeur upon which to form a mental picture of these twin queens of the Levant, the nursery of sea-going fleets, the home of those pioneer seamen whose ships dominated the Mediterranean before Romulus and Remus were

suckled by the wolf, before Athens started on her colonial career, before Alexander set forth on his campaign of conquest, and at a time when our ancestors in Britain were still painting their hairy bodies blue, and had not yet seriously discussed the question of female suffrage.

The harbours of Tyre and Sidon are silted up, and will now accommodate nothing bigger than a fishing-boat. Both towns were besieged and battered at the time of the Crusades and changed hands on several occasions, and they have gradually dwindled down into being dirty, third-rate Turkish towns, with little to show save the site where once they reigned in all their glory.

Of the other cities, or sites, I have mentioned above, Damascus is reputed to be the oldest city in the world; that is to say, the oldest city still in existence and flourishing. Older than Babylon, older than Nineveh, Damascus no doubt owes its perennial vigour to its exceptionally favourable site and its splendid water-supply.

Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? The cool waters of the Abana, rising in the Anti-Lebanon Mountains, flow through Damascus, the melting snow keeping it as well supplied in the summer as in the winter. The life-giving stream never fails, until finally it flows eastward and is lost amidst the arid wastes of the Great Syrian Desert.

The *Rapid* had not been many weeks on the coast of Syria before we paid a visit to Jaffa (ancient Joppa) and arranged for a trip to Jerusalem. This was before the Holy Land had been desecrated by the railway and the motor omnibus, so that the only way to get to

Jerusalem from Jaffa was on the back of a horse, mule, or ass. The distance is about forty miles, and as some of the animals were rough in their paces and Eastern saddles are not exactly beds of roses, the ride to Jerusalem proved to be rather trying to the stern-sheets of some of our sailors; but they stuck to the job—though not always to their horses—and all arrived eventually at the Holy City.

We were a large party: five officers and forty of the crew started on a week's trip to Jerusalem. One day going up, one day coming down, and five to spend sight-seeing, under the guidance of that most excellent dragoman Joe Ferris. Poor Joe! he was on board the *Victoria* when she was rammed and capsized some years afterwards, and was not amongst the saved. He was the regular naval dragoman *and* bumboatman attached to the senior officer's ship on the coast of Syria. He accompanied me on all my trips, and it was with grief that I heard of his tragic end.

The party started from Jaffa at seven a.m., stopped at a halfway-house for lunch, and some of us got to Jerusalem at six o'clock in the evening; but not all of us. Far from it; for on comparing notes in the morning, we found that most of our gallant sailors had struggled in by twos and threes, leading their tired steeds, between the hours of one and four a.m., which was not surprising, seeing that directly we were out of the town of Jaffa, and there was plenty of sea-room, they started to run races; and by the time the course and distance made good from Jaffa was east ten miles the actual courses steered had been so erratic and the speed so excessive, that even the hardy little Syrian horses had had about enough of it, and refused to go any faster than a walk, and in some cases to carry their

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, JERUSALEM FROM THE ROOF OF THE MEDITERRANEAN HOTEL.

would-be riders at all, who therefore had to "tow" them, as they called it. Hence the late arrivals at Jerusalem.

I have not the least intention of embarking upon an attempt to describe Jerusalem and the so-called Holy Places. This has been done already a hundred times over by competent painters of word-pictures, men gifted with vivid imaginations, who have described in glowing terms all that they saw, and sometimes what they didn't see, but thought they saw and wished to see.

I will spare the reader from any attempts to emulate the writings of the distinguished travellers in the Holy Land. Has he not Dean Stanley and Mark Twain? What more can he want?

Personally I was disappointed with Jerusalem. Probably I expected too much. There is an artificiality about many of the show-places (so called sacred sites) which produces a feeling of scepticism and an unholy inclination to scoff. For instance, it is difficult to believe that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is on the site of our Lord's tomb. It is well inside the walls of the city, and the city must have been at least as extensive 1,900 years ago as it is to-day; and as to the Church of the Nativity, which is supposed to be built on the site of the stable wherein Christ was born, it can be no better than a vague guess which placed it where it is, as they never thought of looking for the site until several centuries after the date of that event which so profoundly affected the course of the world's history.

Amongst other marvels, the credulous tourist is shown Noah's tomb; it is one hundred and twenty feet long, and one cannot help thinking that if Noah required a tomb of that length, he might have stepped

overboard from the ark and walked ashore several days before he did.

In the Church of the Nativity we found an armed Turkish guard of Mahomedan soldiers—a precaution which is found to be necessary to prevent the rival Christian sects from cutting each other's throats. "Behold how these Christians love one another"!

There can be no question as to the site of Jerusalem itself, nor of the Mount of Olives, nor of Solomon's Temple; but of the Garden of Gethsemane, of Calvary, of the site of the stable of the Nativity, one may be permitted to be sceptical, without irreverence.

On several occasions I asked our guide, Joe Ferris, if he thought the various "places of interest" he was pointing out to us were really the sites they professed to be; but Joe was very conscientious, and would never commit himself beyond a cautious, "That's what they say."

On our return to Beyrout I paid a visit to Damascus and also to Baalbec; but both these places have so often been described by intelligent travellers—and others—that I do not propose to say anything about them, further than to record the fact that Baalbec is about the only one of all the famous places in this classic land which not only fulfilled, but surpassed, my expectations of its beauty and grandeur. In my humble opinion, the temples at Baalbec—or what is left of them—far surpass the magnificence of the Parthenon at Athens, or any other Grecian temples.

Mark Twain christened his horse "Baalbec," because he was a noble ruin; but it does not follow that the American humorist failed to admire and appreciate Baalbec because he made a joke about it. He made a joke of most things.

Antioch was another of the famous sites we visited. Its glory has departed, and it is now but a third-rate Turkish town. There are, however, a few remains still in existence, which enable one to picture its former extent and the splendour and grace of its Grecian architecture.

The famous grove of Daphne was just outside the walls of ancient Antioch, but the site is as doubtful as that of many of the other show-places of Syria and Palestine.

There are still some remains of the walls of the great city in the days of its pride, and there is a large piece of a colossal aqueduct which has also withstood the shocks of the numerous earthquakes which have from time to time devastated the city. The first of these, duly recorded in history—though there are traditions of earlier ones—was in 148 B.C.; then one in A.D. 47; one in A.D. 115, when the city was full of the Roman army, which Trajan was to lead against the Parthians; one in A.D. 526; one in A.D. 528, in which 5,000 lives were lost; one in 587; and one in 588. Small wonder, then, that there are such scanty remains of this once famous city, where the disciples were first called Christians.

I made the trip to Antioch, with some of my shipmates, from Alexandretta. It is a beautiful ride, through the Bielan Pass, the so-called gates of Syria, the route by which Alexander the Great invaded that country after defeating Darius on the Plain of Issus.

At Antioch we took up our quarters in the house of the British Consular Agent. These Consular Agents occupy a peculiar position; they get no pay, but they make it pay, to use a popular expression. This gentleman was a rich Jewish merchant, who owned one of

the best houses in the town, and he entertained us most hospitably for three days, with the best of everything that Antioch could supply. We were a party of four, and he placed at our disposal two bedrooms and a sitting-room, all comfortably furnished. Being an Israelite, neither he nor any of his family took their meals with us; in fact, we never saw the family at all; but our host was most kind and attentive, frequently visiting us and seeing that all our wants and comforts were attended to.

When we were about to take our leave and return to Alexandretta, I called for Joe, our dragoman, and asked him what there was to pay. "Nothing, sir," said Joe. "The old gentleman would be very much insulted if you were to offer him money." "Well," I said, "if he won't take money, we must at any rate make him a handsome present of some sort, as he is an absolute stranger. He did not invite us to his house; you brought us here on your own responsibility, and the old gentleman must be a good deal out of pocket by our visit." "Never fear, sir," said Joe. "You need not be alarmed about his being out of pocket; your visit to his house will probably be worth about five hundred pounds to him."

This sounded rather strange, so I asked Joe to explain, and his explanation was somewhat to the following effect. Our host was not only a merchant on a considerable scale, but he was also a money-lender, and he had a large amount of outstanding debts owing to him throughout the town. He was entitled to fly the British ensign, by virtue of his office as British Consular Agent, and he would represent to his debtors that the Captain of the British man-of-war had come to stay with him for the purpose of enabling him to collect his debts!

THE GREAT STONE, BAALBEC. (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT—JOE, THE AUTHOR, MIREHOUSE.)

Strange as this may sound to those unacquainted with the customs of Eastern merchants, and making due allowance for exaggeration on the part of Joe and his five hundred pounds, I still felt that in all probability our courteous host would not be out of pocket by our visit; so with hearty thanks and many polite speeches on both sides, we bid him farewell, mounted our horses, and had a delightful ride back to Alexandretta, or Iscanderoon, as the Turks call it.

It is impossible to visit the sites of the great cities of Syria and Asia Minor without wondering why so many of them have fallen into ruins and so much of the land around them is uncultivated. Has the climate altered? Is there less rain than there used to be? Or is it all due to the Turks and the earthquakes?

Our visit to Antioch was most interesting and enjoyable; but there is no rose without a thorn, and our thorn consisted in the fact that our host's house was over a coppersmith's shop, and at about six o'clock every morning there arose a most diabolical noise, as if half a dozen lunatics had started off playing cymbals at the same time, all trying to see who could make the most noise. One can get accustomed to most things, and no doubt our host and his family had got accustomed to the coppersmiths. We were not there long enough to enable us to sleep through the din, and as I lay awake in the morning I could think of nothing but St. Paul's remark, "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works."

CHAPTER III

THE SPORTSMAN'S PARADISE

I HAD written the two preceding chapters in continuation of my "Memories of the Sea," when I was visited by a severe illness, which kept me in bed for many months; and then came the great war, which had been long foreseen by those who had watched and noted the German preparations for it—preparations which were either not seen by the political lawyers who governed the United Kingdom, or which by them—in their wisdom—were ignored, as being of less consequence than party preparations for catching the votes of those who were ignorant of the ambitions of Germany and of the general trend of European politics.

It will be remembered that the grave and earnest warnings of Lord Roberts, and of those who supported him, were treated with contumely and even with spiteful ridicule by our ruling politicians, who wanted money —not for preparation for the inevitable war which that great soldier had so clearly foreseen, but for bribing the most ignorant and most numerous section of the community to keep themselves in power and in further enjoyment of the rich emoluments of their various offices.

Thus the great war found the British Empire totally unprepared; and while I write (in September, 1915) the consequences of this lack of foresight and sound statesmanship have not yet been fully revealed, though

we have already seen enough to make us feel ashamed and disgusted with government by political lawyers.

I have not, however, taken up my pen to write about the war or of the causes which led to it; but rather—at the earnestly expressed wishes of my family—to continue writing my memories of life in the Navy in the last century.

I was at Antioch—in the spirit—when the war broke out, and I feel uncommonly glad that I am not there now—in the flesh; for much as I love my old friends the Turks, greatly as I admire many of their stirling national virtues—yes, virtues—I would not trust their friendship nor their humanity, so long as they are under the influence of a Power which has not only utterly disregarded every practice of civilized warfare, but has also perjured her national honour and good faith, and has openly behaved with a calculated and cold-blooded savagery unknown in Europe for many centuries.

And now to return to the cruise of the *Rapid* in the winter of 1878–79. Shortly after my return from Antioch to Alexandretta, I took the little ship across the Gulf of Scanderoon and moored her snugly in Ayas Bay, intending to make a fairly long stay there, though going for occasional cruises to exercise the crew and to avoid grounding on our own beef-bones, a danger which is popularly supposed to await any ship which remains too long at anchor at any one place; though I must admit that during all my long service of fifty-one years I never heard any strictly reliable evidence that this catastrophe had ever actually occurred, notwithstanding it is on record that the flagship on the Pacific station did once remain at anchor in Esquimalt Harbour for fourteen months without getting under way.

The anchorage at Ayas Bay is about two miles from the little town—or rather village—of Ayas, and the country around is extremely wild and very sparsely populated, and is full of game, a veritable sportsman's paradise. Wild boar abound, and in winter there are woodcock, snipe, francolin, plover, wild geese, and a large variety of the great family of wild ducks, and from being so little disturbed they are not so difficult to approach as they are in more civilized countries.

The natives do not appear to shoot anything except the pigs; and, indeed, the actual natives do not shoot these, as they are Mahomedans, and, of course, would not touch the unclean beast; but at the time of our visit there was a party of Armenian Christians who had come across from the other side of the gulf after the pigs, which they shoot mainly for the skins. They also make a very rough kind of sausage from the flesh; but as they appear to put into these all the gristle and sinew they can find in the animal, the sausages were, to us, quite uneatable.

These Armenians were very good fellows, and we made great friends with them. They did not interfere with our shooting in the least; in fact, they assisted us greatly, as they knew all the best places; and as they used to shoot by night and we by day, and also acted as guides and beaters for us in the daytime, I don't know when they slept. Probably they did not remain out all night. We gave them no money pay, but used occasionally to give them presents of Navy tobacco, which they greatly appreciated; we also gave them all our pig-skins, and finally at the end of the campaign we took them and their skins across the gulf in the *Rapid*, and landed them at their homes, thus saving them a sixty miles' tramp with a good chance of being

robbed by the way. They considered themselves amply repaid for their services, and we parted the best of friends.

I had been told by my predecessor whom I relieved on the coast of Syria that there was a recognized formula of proceedings for that station, which included the spending of three or four of the worst winter months at Ayas Bay. The letter to the Commander-in-Chief ran somewhat as follows:

"Sir,—As I see by the sailing directions for the Eastern Mediterranean that the only safe anchorage on the coast of Syria during the winter months is in the Bay of Ayas, on the north shore of Scanderoon Gulf, I propose to proceed there in H.M. ship under my command, and to make that my headquarters when not cruising. I shall be in telegraphic communication with you through H.M. Consul at Alexandretta."

To which came the brief but welcome reply, "Approved."

My Commander-in-Chief at the time was Sir Geoffrey Hornby, affectionately known in the Navy as Uncle Jeff. He was himself a keen sportsman, and knew all about the attractions of Ayas Bay.

It again occurs to me that in writing an account of my two years' service in the *Rapid* I may possibly convey to the reader the impression that it was all beer and skittles, and that Queen Victoria kept a fine steam yacht for me, in order that I might enjoy some of the best wild shooting in the world, free of expense.

My two years' command of the *Rapid* certainly was the easiest and most enjoyable time I have ever had in the Navy, either before or since, and I made the most of it. But it must not be supposed that an independent

command in the Mediterranean is all joy. The summer months are very trying. The heat is quite tropical, if not more so. Even those who live on shore in airy houses with green verandas and venetian blinds feel it and grumble; but the confined space of the cabin of a small ship adds greatly to the discomfort. My little cabin in the *Rapid* used to become a veritable oven by two o'clock in the afternoon, either at sea or in harbour. At sea there was generally a breeze of some sort to temper the heat; but in harbour there was no relief. It was useless to go on shore, as it was just as bad there. At Corfu, for instance, during the summer nobody appeared to stir out of their houses until after sunset; the streets were empty, and I found it difficult to get enough exercise to keep one in health.

It is not, however, my intention to grumble or to dwell upon the discomforts of the Mediterranean summer. In the Navy we get ups and downs, rough and smooth, and it is just as well to make the most of the smooth—when we get it. But I have made this digression—the second one of this nature—in order that the reader may not run away with the wrong idea that it is *all* smooth, even in the Mediterranean.

Shortly after the *Rapid* had been snugly moored in Ayas Bay I went for a trip up the Jahun River to a famous sporting district, well known to naval officers who have had the luck to spend the winter on the coast of Syria.

The arrangements for camping out in the wilds of Asia Minor took some time to make, but early in January the expedition started. It consisted of my old friend and very dear chum Mirehouse, who, alas! has since joined the great majority, the Second-Lieutenant of the *Rapid*, and myself. I also took my boat's crew of five

sailors, for beaters; my Maltese cook and my valet; Joe Ferris, bumboatman, dragoman, and interpreter; and last, though not least, Sergeant Thomas of the Royal Marines. Sergeant Thomas was a Welshman and a keen sportsman. He accompanied me on all my shooting trips; he was the best, most intelligent and most indefatigable beater I ever saw. Nothing could stop him, not even the famous "wait-a-bit" thorn of the Levant. He was also my right-hand man in camp; he kept everybody in order, and they all obeyed him; and yet he seemed to do more hard work himself than any three other men. He was very silent, a man of few words and of great strength, both moral and physical. I looked on one evening while he conquered a big and savage Molossian dog which I bought from some natives for hunting wild boar out of the covers. The dog was tied up to a tree; the natives got their three dollars and departed. I then told my coxswain to look after the dog and feed him; but the coxswain came to me in about half an hour and told me he could do nothing with the savage beast, as he called him; that he would not let him nor any of the other men go near him, and he would not eat. I then suggested that we should leave him alone till he got hungry, and perhaps that would tame him; but Sergeant Thomas, who was standing by, said he thought that would only make him worse; that he had had something to do with dogs, and he thought he could tame him if I would let him try. "All right, sergeant," says I; "see what you can do with him."

Karra was about the size of an ordinary Newfoundland dog, but with an unusually big head and teeth like a wolf, which he showed in a most truculent manner, snarling and growling savagely when anyone went near

him. I asked the sergeant how he was going to tame him. "If you will attract the dog's attention, sir, in the other direction, I'll get hold of him." This I did, taking care to keep beyond the length of his rope. The sergeant then ran in and seized the dog by the throat, before he knew what was the matter. The rope was then cast off by the sergeant's directions; he lifted up the dog as if he had been no bigger than a fox-terrier, swung him round over his head two or three times, and brought him down on the ground with a terrific thud, knocking the wind out of him. This operation was repeated four or five times. The savage growls changed gradually into howls, and finally into piteous whines for mercy; then the sergeant dropped him, and he lay on his side panting, with all the wind knocked out of him. As soon as he had recovered sufficiently to get on his legs again he cringed up to the sergeant and licked his hands. "There, sir," says the sergeant, "I think that will do for the present." And it did, not only for the present, but for all time, and for ever after the sergeant could do whatever he liked with Karra, who obeyed his every command just like one of his own marines. We shall hear more of Karra later on; he was certainly one of the most remarkable dogs I ever came across.

Our camping-ground was about twenty-five miles up the Jahun River, on a suitable spot near some small patches of cultivation and about a quarter of a mile from the river bank. The spot was well known to Joe, our bumboatman and interpreter, who had accompanied many a party of sporting naval officers to the same place on former occasions. We started early. The steam pinnace towed one of the cutters loaded with our camp equipage; and arriving at our

camping-ground a little after noon, we had plenty of time to pitch our tents and make ourselves snug before dark. It was my first camping-out expedition, and consequently I knew nothing about it; but my friend Mirehouse and our indefatigable sergeant seemed to be quite at home at the business; they gave the necessary directions and did most of the work.

Game was plentiful, and, to use a popular modern expression, we had the time of our lives, and fed the camp with our guns. The wild pigs were excellent eating; not a bit like pork, but more like venison, tender, fat and juicy. An old boar with big tusks might be a bit tough, but the sows and the young ones were very good, and we not only had enough for ourselves, but sent several consignments back to the ship, where they were much appreciated.

The francolin is a beautiful bird, rather larger than a partridge. I believe he is known in India as the black partridge of the Deccan. The flesh is white and delicate, and is a very pleasant change from woodcock, of which one soon gets tired. We also got wild duck and an occasional wild goose; but the latter is an overrated bird for the table, though he makes a very pretty overhead shot, and comes down with a flop.

Tastes vary, and our bluejacket beaters would not be bothered plucking woodcock for themselves. They liked pig, and as we usually had two or three hanging up on the trees in our camp, they could cut off a steak and fry it whenever they felt hungry, which seemed to be very often. But what they liked above everything was coots. There was a small lake not far from our camp, and besides wild duck, it was inhabited by hundreds of coots, which our sailors asked us to shoot for them. It was not much sport, as the coots were

very tame, and we shot a large number of them, as it was for the pot. "Ah," said my coxswain, "some flavour about them birds, and they makes the most delicious soup." Coot soup! I didn't taste it.

One of our beats for pigs was peculiar. There was an island in the river, covered with the densest jungle, and this jungle was the day resort of the pigs, but it was far too thick to give any chance for a shot at them. What appeared to happen was this: The pigs swam the river at nightfall and raided the patches of cultivation on the mainland, and then swam back again before it was daylight. We could see their tracks cut deep in the soft clay of the river banks; quite like a cattle track in a farmyard. There were four or five of these deep-cut pig roads on our side of the river, where the bank was very steep, nearly perpendicular; it was obvious, therefore, that if the pigs were driven off the island they would land at one of these roads. There was fairly thick jungle on our side of the river also; so we placed our three guns well concealed at three of these roads and sent all the beaters we could muster, including our friends the Armenians, over to the island in a boat. They made a hideous noise, and the Armenians let off their long, gaspipe, single-barrelled guns, to the great danger of the other beaters, and they also set fire to the jungle in several places, and thus made it too hot for the pigs on the island. The river was here about sixty or seventy yards across, deep and fairly rapid. After a short time several pigs appeared on the island bank, looked round for a moment, then jumped into the river and swam across.

The roads on our side were not all guarded, as we had not enough guns, and it was impossible to tell at which road a pig would land, until he was quite close

THE COOK AND HIS TENT—CAMP ON THE JAHUN RIVER.
From a sketch by the author.

to the bank; but I had not long to wait before it was obvious that a pig was going to land at my road.

I was lying down, well hidden in bushwood, as I thought; but I could tell by the twinkle in his little eye that the pig saw me just before he landed. I was afraid he would turn, but not a bit of him; it is hard to turn a pig when once he has made up his mind where he wants to go to: he is a plucky beast, and woe betide anyone who gets in his way! I thought my pig would take some little time getting out of the deep water and climbing up the bank; but he came out like a jack-in-the-box, went up the steep road in about three bounds, and then when he reached the top and there was no fear that he would fall back into the river, I put a ball into him just behind the shoulder. He ran a dozen yards into the bush, and I heard him fall, though I could not see him. However, I knew he was dead.

Shortly after this another pig came down to the bank on the island side; he had a good look around, and must have seen either me or one of the other guns, for instead of jumping into the river, like a well-educated pig, he turned slowly round and was walking back into the bush; and as I knew that all the beaters were at the other end of the island, I fired. It was an end-on shot, and not an easy one, but I was lucky enough to rake him fore and aft. He went some little distance into the thicket, and then fell dead; and very fortunately one of the beaters came across him on his return to the boat, and he was brought over. The other two guns were unlucky, and did not get a shot.

Besides the pigs, we had good sport with the woodcock and the francolin, and also with the wild duck.

Beyond the little lake where we shot the coot for

the sailors' coot soup there was a large shallow lake covered to a great extent with high canes, but with lanes of open water between the patches of canes. It was an ideal place for wildfowl-shooting, and there were plenty of them; so we built a cane raft to hold two, one gun and a marker, to try and note where the birds fell. The raft was moored and hidden in a patch of high canes, and another gun went round the lake in my little skiff, which we had brought up from the ship. The skiff put the ducks up, and the gun in her got some fairly good shots, and could pick up his birds; but the gun on the raft got the most beautiful overhead shots it is possible to imagine. His sport, however, was greatly clouded by the fact that he could not pick up his birds until the skiff came round again, and a large proportion of them were lost, as it was very difficult to mark the spot where they fell, and to find them amongst the high canes.

There was, however, something even more tantalizing for the man on the raft than the honest loss of dead birds, and that was that some of them were devoured almost directly they fell, by some large birds that were circling round high overhead. I know not if they were osprey or goshawks or fishing eagles, or what their real names were, though they were called some hard and strange names by the man on the raft, and still stranger names by his marker. These birds pounced down from a height out of range for a shot-gun, and as they descended with great rapidity it was very difficult to hit them as they came down; and although you knew that they were eating your duck within twenty or thirty yards of you, they were not in sight, and you could do nothing. It was easy enough to shoot them as they rose, for they rose slowly; but this was not

much satisfaction when you knew that they had your duck inside them. Some of them *were* shot, however.

No doubt these birds of prey had just as much right to the wild duck as we had; but they were quite capable of killing their own, and it would have been more sport for them to do so. It would seem, therefore, that it was downright laziness on their part to come and steal ours.

The weather was, on the whole, very fine during our trip up the river. There were frosts at night, but the days were generally sunny, with a keen bracing air which was most exhilarating, and one never felt more than comfortably tired after the longest day's tramp.

On only one occasion did I ever know a pig to charge, and this case was so remarkable that I think it is worth recording. It was after our return to the ship that we landed one afternoon to beat a marshy canebreak near the mouth of the river, where we knew there were pig. We were obliged, from the nature of the ground, to beat "up wind," which is not in accordance with good pigging tactics, but was in this case unavoidable. There was a strong wind, which made a great noise in the canes. The beaters, all armed with boarding-pikes for self-defence, were sent down to leeward about a mile, with orders to spread out and beat up to the guns in line abreast. There was a long cold wait for the guns, and then I heard, but could not see, the beaters getting nearer and nearer, and I thought it was going to be a blank beat, when suddenly I heard a great and unusual noise amongst the beaters, and running towards them through the canes, I found that a pig, which had never been fired at or even seen by beaters or guns, had suddenly turned and charged back through the line of beaters. Young Henry Rose, the bowman of

my gig, happened to be in his way, and before Rose had time to bring his boarding-pike to a defensive position, the pig had rolled him over, giving him a deep gash in the thigh as he passed him. But the strangest part of the whole business was that the old boar, instead of going back to his lair, from which he had been driven, turned again and walked quietly out of the cover into the open, close to Mirehouse, who shot him dead. He was the heaviest boar, with the best tusks, of any we killed. The tusks were mounted and given to Rose as a memento, and being a healthy young chap, he was quite recovered in a couple of weeks, though the wound was a deep one.

All things must come to an end, and so did the winter of 1878-79, and with it our delightful stay at Ayas Bay, the sportsman's paradise; but we had excellent sport with the woodcock and the francolin up to the very last.

When there was no longer any good excuse for lying at Ayas Bay, I went down to Beyrout, communicated with our Consul-General there, and then "showed the flag" at all the principal ports on the Syrian coast.

One day while we were lying at Beyrout, our head-quarters in the summer, the Danish Consul came on board and asked me if I would accept a present of a small bear, which he had intended to keep, but found that it made so much noise at night that it kept his children awake, and he wanted to find a comfortable home for it. I said I should be happy to give the bear a comfortable home on board the *Rapid*, and was inquisitive enough to ask him how he got it, and this was what he said: "I was riding on the Damascus road one evening, about three miles from Beyrout, just as it was getting dusk, and I saw five small bears

playing in the middle of the road; so I jumped off my horse, picked up one of them, put it in my pocket, and galloped into Beyrout."

I asked him why he did not pick up more of them. "Oh," he said, "I was afraid the mother bear must be somewhere near, and she would come looking for her baby, and catch me off my horse, and be very angry, and perhaps kill me, as I had no gun."

I sent for the little bear and got it on board. It was no bigger than a cat, and for some time we fed it on milk from a small bottle with the finger of a kid-glove on the neck of the bottle. The little creature throve, and grew to be a big brown bear. It became omnivorous and very greedy. It would eat or drink anything, but much preferred stealing to waiting until it was fed. It was always loose, and roamed the ship at will and helped itself to whatever it fancied. It was most mischievous, and consequently became a great pet with the men. They would call it a "mascot" in the present day, but pet is a shorter word. The men played tricks on the bear, and the bear played tricks on the men, even to tearing their trousers, but they seemed to think that rather a lark. One day they made the bear very drunk, on a mixture of sardine oil and rum, and Bruin staggered along the deck just like an old-time tar rolling down Common Hard when a ship paid off in Portsmouth Dockyard. This was a decidedly vulgar joke, and I asked that it might not be repeated, as it was bad for Bruin's morals.

During the hot weather I usually dined on deck, and one evening when the table was laid and my steward had gone below to fetch the dinner and I was on the bridge waiting, I saw Bruin walking aft towards the table, looking quite innocent, and as there was nothing

to eat on the table but a small bit of bread, I suspected no mischief and called out, "Ah, Bruin, sold again!" But I was rather hasty, and it turned out to be the other way on; for when Bruin arrived at the table he stood up on his hind-legs, had a good look round, and finding nothing to eat, he caught hold of the corner of the table-cloth with his disappointed teeth and whisked everything off on to the deck, breaking glass and crockery. He then galloped off laughing all over his face, before I could get at him with a rope's-end. He was a charming pet, and full of fun.

CHAPTER IV

A TRIP IN THE LEBANON MOUNTAINS

In the month of May the *Rapid* was lying in the Bay of Tripoli—the Syrian Tripoli, not the African one. The weather was getting hot, and as there was nothing particular to do at Tripoli, beyond showing the flag, I decided to take a trip into the Lebanon mountains to try and get a shot at a bear.

The party consisted of Lieutenant Carter (Mirehouse had gone home), my coxswain, Sergeant Thomas, Joe the dragoman, and myself. It is quite useless to travel in Syria without an interpreter, unless you can speak, at least, *some* of the many languages.

Joe hired the horses, including two for baggage and camp equipage, and we started very early one morning, so as to get out of the plain before the heat of the afternoon sun. Our route through the plain lay along the bank of the Brook Kishon, where the Prophet Elijah was fed by the ravens. We found the Brook Kishon quite brackish and undrinkable.

About noon we got into the valley of the little river Kadisha, and began to ascend rapidly. I am inclined to think that the Kishon and the Kadisha are the same river, but am not certain, as we left the former an hour or two before we struck the latter. (N.B.—Distances in the East are counted by hours and not by miles.)

The scenery in the Kadisha Valley was most beautiful. In some places the valley was little more than a gorge

but it was thickly and beautifully wooded throughout. There was no road, merely a track, and in some places this was thickly strewn with boulders. Yet I don't think I ever enjoyed a ride more than I did that ride up the Kadisha. We had come out of a sweltering plain, and the cool bracing air on the higher ground, the fresh spring green of the trees, the scenery when the valley opened out enough to get a view, combined with a sort of holiday feeling on getting away from the confined space of a small ship, was most exhilarating and enjoyable. There were some magnificent walnut and chestnut trees, the finest I ever saw.

Of course the sergeant brought the faithful Karra with him to guard the camp, both by day and night, and right well the dog did his work; but he did more than this. Joe and I led the cavalcade, which at times became rather straggling, and as the baggage-horses with their attendants were fond of loitering, Carter brought up the rear to act as whipper-in; but unfortunately he dropped too far behind and lost the track. We did not miss him at first, but when we did we got off our horses and sat down and waited. No Carter.

Then up and spake the sergeant, "I'll send Karra to find him." He called Karra, spoke a few words to him, which might have been in Welsh for all I could make of them; then he waved his hand, and the dog trotted off, back on our tracks, with his nose to the ground. After about half an hour Karra reappeared, with Carter following him. Carter had lost his way; Karra found him and led him back to the party. It seemed to me almost uncanny, like magic, and the most singular part of the business was that Carter and Karra were not on speaking terms. Carter could not touch

him; nor could I, for the matter of that, though he was supposed to be my dog. No officer could touch Karra, though the men could handle him just as they pleased. I have seen the same thing happen before with another dog in another ship. I cannot account for it, as no officer ever ill-treated Karra. On board the ship he lived forward with the men, and never came abaft the mainmast, except for one purpose.

Our first camping-ground was just outside the village of Bsherra, and we pitched our tents on a piece of inviting-looking greensward on the edge of a little stream. Karra was immediately put on guard by the sergeant, and he kept the inquisitive native children at a respectful distance from our tents.

At Bsherra we were four thousand feet above the sea, and the climate was delightfully cool and bracing. We were going up into the mountains, much farther up than Joe had ever been before, so it was necessary to get a local guide, and Joe was sent into the village to get one. In a short time he returned with a fine weather-beaten old Arab, who answered to the name of Mousa. He could not speak a word of English, and we only knew a few words of Arabic; but it is astonishing what a lot can be done by signs, and for one whole day Mousa was our sole guide, as the work in the mountains was too hard for fat old Joe.

Mousa was a professional hunter, and he had intended starting in a day or two on his own hook to try and get a shot at a bear, if we had not come along and made it worth his while to act as our guide. But a very unfortunate thing happened. Mousa had a rival living in the same village, and this rival got wind of our intentions, and started off that very night for the place that Mousa intended taking us to; but we did not know

of this until afterwards, when we got to the place and found that the hated rival had forestalled us and shot *our* bear!

Our next day's march was a short one, to "The Cedars," six thousand feet above the sea, and we pitched our tents about four o'clock in the afternoon, beneath the spreading branches of these magnificent trees.

Many travellers have written about the famous cedars of Lebanon, but no description of them that I had ever read gave an adequate idea of their beauty and grandeur. Some of the trees are credited with a growth of two thousand years; but, alas! the whole grove contains only three or four hundred trees, covering a space of from thirty to forty acres, and this is all that is now left of what, in King Solomon's days, was probably a magnificent and apparently inexhaustible forest. The grove is now guarded and strictly preserved; but people are allowed to light fires with the windfalls, which we promptly did, as it was cold.

I measured the girth of one of the trees with a tape, and it was thirty-seven feet six feet from the ground. It was a grand tree, with immense wide-spreading branches, each of which would have made a goodly tree in itself; its grandeur, moreover, was greatly enhanced by modern art and culture, in the shape of a deeply carved inscription on its massive trunk, which told all whom it might concern that the cedars of Lebanon had been visited by Ebenezer Potts, of New York City, in 1868. But it is fair to say that Mr. Potts was not by a long way the only distinguished traveller who left a record of his visit on the trunk of one of these noble trees. There are bumptious vandals in other countries besides the United States, and I only mention

this particular inscription because it glared conspicuously on our camp.

There was quite a large gathering of wild-looking natives around our camp fire that evening and well into the night. They all seemed to be friends of Mousa, and Joe also found some old acquaintances. We could not understand any of the conversation, but Joe told me there was a long discussion between Mousa and his friends, relative to the practicability or otherwise of the route by which the former intended to take us to our next camping-ground in the mountains. The friends said the season was late, that May was more like April, and that the snow would not be sufficiently melted to enable horses to get to the proposed camping-ground by any route. Mousa was of a different opinion, and said we could do it; and we did, though with some difficulty.

Late that evening Joe brought to me a venerable-looking old Arab, who was holding on to his cummerbund with both hands and groaning. Joe said his friend had internal pains, so I administered a good stiff glass of whisky, and the old boy went his way; but he came back again next morning, saying that the pains, though rather better, were still troublesome. Joe, however, while interpreting, gave me a wink ; and on this occasion I presented the sufferer with two Cockle's pills. The old gentleman—well worthy of that name—was probably greatly disappointed, but was far too polite to show it. He made a bow, took the two pills, loosened a corner of his turban, wrapped the pills up in it, tucked them in, made another bow, and departed. There is certainly a great charm in good manners, even in a wild Arab seeking whisky, contrary to the tenets of his faith.

We made an early start on the following morning, as we expected that we had a hard day's climb before us.

After leaving the cedars we had about two hours' easy work on a fairly good track, up a gradual slope, and then we came to the snow, and our troubles began. Our route lay across the face of a very steep hill, and the path might be described as a fairly good goat-path, where it was visible; but in many places it was covered with fresh snow and we had some difficulty in finding it. In some places the snow was deep, and in others the angle of the slope was so steep that the snow could not lie anywhere except on the path itself. It was rather exciting; but on the whole the little Syrian horses were wonderfully surefooted.

At one place we came to a sort of gully in the side of the mountain, round which our path wound; here there was a regular snowdrift, and the snow was lying in ridges, notwithstanding the steepness of the slope. We looked long at this place, and then, deciding that discretion was the better part of mountain-climbing, we dismounted and led our horses.

About halfway across this gully the commissariat horse slipped and fell. Down he went, over and over, first his legs in the air and then his boxes. We looked on breathlessly at what we believed would be the loss of a horse, for which we should have to pay, and also the loss of our provisions; but the snow here was very soft, and after rolling down for about a couple of hundred feet he brought up in an extra soft patch of snow, with his legs in the air and the boxes embedded in the soft snow.

Strange to say, the horse was unhurt and very little damage was done to our provisions; but there was some delay in getting the horse up again, leading him to a

safe place, and repacking his burden. We then resumed our march, and in about another hour we came to the summit ridge of the spur which had to be crossed to get to our proposed camping-ground. This looked like an insurmountable difficulty; for though the snow slope on our side was gradual and easy, the north wind had blown the snow up into what in Switzerland is called a cornice, and on the other, or southern, side there was a drop of forty or fifty feet almost perpendicular.

We rode up and down looking for a better place, but it was evident that Mousa, with his local knowledge and hunter's instinct, had already brought us to the best; for, in either direction, to the right or to the left, the snow wall rose higher and was more nearly perpendicular.

Joe chuckled, for he had been a pessimist ever since we left the cedars. He did not like being dragged up into this cold and inhospitable region, and had been repeatedly telling us that we had better give it up and go home. But old Mousa was a man of determination and resource. He had no intention of giving in; his honour and reputation were at stake, and he took entire charge of the proceedings. Once we were down this place, it would be all plain-sailing, as there was no snow lying on the south-eastern face of the mountain, which we should have to traverse; and it did seem hard to be beaten when we were within a few feet of a comparatively good road. So we all set to work under Mousa's directions, and having unloaded the baggage animals, we scooped out a sort of gutter in the snow wall, which, although not quite perpendicular, was very steep. We then strewed shingle in the gutter, and set to work to get the horses down; and this was how it was done.

The first horse was blindfolded and brought to the edge of the slope; a burly native caught hold of his tail, and another man got hold of the first by his cummerbund. The horse was then shoved over into the gutter, willy-nilly. The two men, planting their heels firmly in the snow, acted as a drag and eased the horse down very slowly till he came to the firm ground at the bottom. This was repeated until all the horses were brought down without accident. We then loaded up and continued our journey; another three hours of easy going brought us to our camping-ground, which was a bare, bleak plateau about eight thousand feet above the sea, and near some of the highest peaks of the Lebanon range, which rise to a height of ten thousand feet.

When we had selected the spot for our camp, by the side of an ice-cold stream, it was just five o'clock, and as we came along we watched Mousa scanning the side of the mountain to see if his rival had been before him and disturbed the game. We saw no one, but late that night the rival arrived in our camp, telling us that he shot a bear about four o'clock that afternoon, and having no means of bringing him down, he had buried him beneath a cairn of big stones to save him from the jackals. This was disappointing for us, as it probably reduced our chances of getting a shot, and old Mousa evidently felt his bad luck keenly, for I am sure he was most anxious that we should get a bear. He said nothing, but sat down on a stone and sighed. He did not scold his rival, or reproach him for cutting us out. On the contrary, he forgave him and next day he helped him to bring down his bear, which was a very big one. Mousa, like most Arabs, was a gentleman, every inch of his gaunt six feet.

CAMP IN THE LEBANON.

From a sketch by Mr. C. W. Cole, R.N.

Our tents were pitched by six o'clock, and then we looked about us, scouring the sides of the mountain with our glasses; but Mousa's keen and practised sight spotted a bear before we did, and he pointed out to us a small black spot on the side of the mountain near a patch of snow. We could then, with our glasses, see quite plainly a bear grubbing in the ground. This south side of the mountain that we were looking at was nearly clear of snow, which only lay in small patches. The May sun was hot, though the nights were bitterly cold.

When we sighted the bear on the side of the mountain the sergeant was greatly excited, and said that if I would come a little way up and hide behind a rock, he "would just run round above the bear and drive him down" to me, so that I could get a shot. The clearness of the atmosphere and the vastness of the surroundings had completely deceived the sergeant as to distances, and he found next morning that it took him three hours' hard climbing to get to the patch of snow near which the bear had been seen on the evening before.

It was obviously too late to go bear-hunting that evening, so we had to curb our impatience, eat our supper and go to bed, but not to sleep. I don't think any of our party slept. The cold was intense, and all our clothes and blankets failed to keep us warm.

We had not hampered ourselves on this expedition with the luxury of beds; we had only our little camp stretchers and a blanket, and the cold seemed to come up out of the ground and freeze the marrow in our bones. We were afraid our unfortunate native attendants, without tents, would be frozen to death before morning; but it turned out that they were far better

off than we were in our tents. They built a circular wall of big stones, and in the centre of it lit a fire of dry brushwood, which they took it in turns to feed. The stones soon got hot, and probably kept the wind out better than our tents; and as there was no rain, they were far more comfortable than we were, though they had only the sky for a canopy.

Two hours before daylight next morning Carter and I, accompanied by Mousa and the sergeant, were stumbling along in the dark over the loose stones, slowly making our way up the side of the mountain, Mousa leading, towards the place where we had seen the bear the evening before.

The exercise soon thawed our frozen marrow, and we had not been long out before we were quite as hot as we wished to be, and rather hotter by the time we got to the patch of snow near which the bear had been seen. It was now broad daylight, but the bear was not there, nor in sight anywhere else. This was disappointing, as Mousa had told Joe that if bears are not disturbed they sometimes remain in the same place for several days.

On the previous evening, while we were watching the bear with our glasses, we wondered what he was doing, as he seemed to remain a long time in one spot and appeared to be very busy. We were equally puzzled now we had got to the place, and could see nothing but the bare mountain-side covered with loose stones and no sign of vegetation of any sort. There were great hollows amongst the stones where the bear had been at work, but still not a vestige of roots nor anything that even a hungry bear would eat; so we applied to Mousa, by signs, to unravel the mystery. He laid down his long single-barrelled gun, went down

on his knees and began grubbing amongst the stones: presently he held up a large brown moth! Then another, and then we found several ourselves. The bear had been eating moths; but it must have taken a great many moths to satisfy a bear that had been hibernating for six months.

We hunted about on this part of the mountain for several hours, seeing bear tracks wherever there was snow, but no bear, and we got back to our camp about noon, tired and hungry, after eight hours' hard climbing.

On our way down to camp we magnanimously helped our rival to bring down the bear he had shot on the previous afternoon. He was a big bear and very heavy, but he was frozen quite stiff, so that we were able to roll him down the steep places, until we got to a place level enough for a donkey to stand upon, where the bear was skinned, cut up, and packed on the ass. Carter bought the skin, and we had bear steaks for dinner that evening and bear's paws for second course; but we came to the conclusion that, as food, fresh bear was not to be compared to Fortnum and Mason's tinned sausages. Possibly the bear was a little too fresh, as we had always heard that bear's paws were esteemed as a great delicacy.

We were not inclined to do anything more active this afternoon than to loaf about in camp and smoke, and to explore the course of the little stream by which we were encamped. We found that it was one of three, all of which sprang suddenly out of ground, and then, after running a short course, united into one quite respectable little river, which, after running another short course, disappeared down a hole in the ground and was seen no more.

We decided to start again at about three o'clock on

the following morning, and scour another part of the mountains as a last chance of getting a shot at a bear. Carter, however, had caught a severe cold and was quite knocked up; so it was decided that only the sergeant and I, with the faithful Mousa, should go up the mountain, and that the rest of the party should strike camp at a reasonable hour and drop down to the cedars, whilst the mountain party should cross over the mountain after their hunt, and come down to the cedars by another route.

This plan was carried out, and although the mountain party did not get a shot at a bear, they had a most interesting climb amidst magnificent scenery, ate a box of sardines and drank a tot of Navy rum on the summit of the highest peak of the Lebanon, much to the sergeant's delight, and then dropped down to the cedars at about four p.m., to find the tents pitched and dinner ready.

Mousa was much distressed at our bad luck in failing to get a shot at a bear; but the old boy had done his best, and he could do no more. He gave the sergeant and me a graphic description of a bear hunt, upon the very spot where it occurred some years before, though perhaps it would be more correct to call it a man hunt. He could not speak a word of our language, and we could only understand a few words of his; yet the whole thrilling scene was as clearly and graphically conveyed to us by signs and gestures as if he had spoken fluently in our mother tongue. The spot was a small plateau not far from the snow-line, wild and barren in the extreme, and near the centre of this plateau, amidst other rocks and boulders of various shapes and sizes, there stood a round table of rock ten or twelve feet high, about twenty yards in diameter, a flat top

and almost perpendicular sides; but there were a few places where an active man might climb up it, if he had time.

On one of his bear-hunting expeditions Mousa had arrived at this place, and creeping cautiously along, listening intently, he became aware of the sound of a bear grubbing amongst the stones. Presently he saw the bear, and taking cover behind the rock, he was able to crawl up to within a dozen yards of the bear without being observed, the animal was so intent upon licking up moths. Mousa waited a minute to get breath, and then, peering round the side of the rock, he let off his long single-barrelled gun and put two bullets into the bear. (Mousa always double-shotted his great gaspipe of a gun. I saw him loading it once. About five drams of powder and two round bullets, rammed down with a greasy rag.) The bear's wounds were not mortal, and, with an angry growl, he came straight for Mousa; and then began as exciting a hunt as any hunter could wish for, the only drawback being that the hunter was now the hunted ("bear behind").

Mousa thought his only chance was to stick to the rock and not to give the wounded bear the advantage of a straight run in the open over rough ground; so round and round the rock he went, with the bear after him. He had no second shot, and nothing but his long knife to trust to. Once or twice the bear nearly caught him, and he was obliged to lighten himself by dropping his gun, which he had no time to reload. Then Mousa gained a little on the bear, who was probably weakening from his wounds and loss of blood; and choosing a spot—which he showed us—the old sportsman made a rush and clambered up on to the top of the

rock; but the bear did not give him much breathing time, and was very quickly after him, climbing up at the same place. Mousa, however, had time to pick up a huge stone, which he was lucky enough to find on the top of the rock, and, waiting until Bruin's head appeared over the edge, he brought the stone down on him with a crash which sent him rolling, stunned, to the bottom; and then without giving him a moment to recover, he jumped down after him and plunged his long knife into his heart. The old hunter acted the whole scene splendidly; his eyes sparkled, he trembled with excitement, and we felt as if we had seen it all with our own eyes.

Another night spent beneath the shade of those venerable cedars, and then we marched back to Tripoli, taking two days about it, as before. We said good-bye to Mousa at Bsherra, giving him a good supply of powder and bullets, besides the pay we had agreed upon. The old man was very grateful, and seemed really sorry to part from us. While sitting over our camp fire on our last evening at the cedars he took off some of his clothes and showed us the scars of wounds he had received during various encounters with bears; he had been terribly mauled, and, by the look of the scars, he must, on one occasion, have very nearly had his left arm torn from his body. He was a fine old sportsman, and I hope he may never want powder and shot and bears to hunt.

CHAPTER V

CONSTANTINOPLE—MARMORA—DERKOS

SHORTLY after our expedition in the Lebanon, recorded in the last chapter, the *Rapid* was ordered to Malta to undergo a general refit, to pay off and recommission with a new crew; and as I had only been a year in the ship, I was reappointed in command. I was very sorry to part with the officers, who were a good lot, though very bad shots; and I was especially sorry to part with my sporting sergeant, who would very much have liked to stay in the *Rapid*, but was obliged to go home with his detachment. I shall never see his like again. The new sergeant did not know a woodcock from a seagull, nor one end of a pig from the other.

The summer at Malta is very trying, and we spent the four hottest months of the year there, refitting the old *Rapid* for her next, and last, commission; but I had nothing to grumble about, as I had spent a most delightful winter, and all places in the Mediterranean are hot in the summer, though perhaps Malta is the hottest. The Malta stone gets baked with the sun; it becomes a veritable oven, and everyone who can get away from it during the hot months does so. It is, however, only fair to say that Malta in winter is one of the gayest places in the British dominions. Balls, parties, teas, picnics, operas, etc.; so that it is a paradise for those who like these sort of things.

In the late autumn of this year (1879) my Admiral

informed me that he intended to send me to Constantinople in the *Rapid*, to spend the winter there as guardship to our Ambassador. Each of the Great Powers keeps a small man-of-war at Constantinople to attend to the wishes of their Ambassadors. They are called the "stationnaires," and are always small ships of little fighting value, as the Porte is very jealous of foreign warships of power coming within range of the capital. A special firman from the Sultan has to be obtained before any of them can pass through the Dardanelles, and the Turkish authorities at Chanak generally keep you waiting two or three days while the firman is being prepared, just to show how important it is, and what a great favour they are conferring by allowing you to go through at all.

It was with great joy that I received my orders for Constantinople. I had not been there since the days of the Crimean War, when I went out in the old three-decker *Royal George*, to bring home troops; but I appreciated my great luck in once more being selected for detached service, far from the gentle attentions of a senior officer. I also knew, from the reports of my friends, that Constantinople was a very pleasant place in winter, and that there was excellent shooting all round the shores of the Sea of Marmora, where I should have to make occasional cruises to exercise the crew at sail drill and gunnery. In fact, I thought the chances of sport were so good that I wrote home immediate to my dear old friend Mirehouse, and asked him to come out again and join the *Rapid* at Constantinople, which he did.

On my arrival at Constantinople in October, our Ambassador (Sir Henry Layard, of Nineveh fame) had not yet left his summer residence at Therapia, on the

Bosphorus; so I took the *Rapid* up there and moored her in a funny little creek near the Embassy villa. We had two anchors out astern, and the other end of her tied up to a big tree, with the additional security of the stream anchor taken on shore and well dug in. So we were very snug there until it was time to move down to the anchorage at the mouth of the Golden Horn, where we were not nearly so snug.

I got on very well with Sir Henry when I came to know him, though I was a little bit startled at first by his somewhat brusque manners. The first time I called on him I thought he kept me standing rather longer than necessary, considering that there was a good deal to talk about and our conversation lasted some time; but he finally asked me to sit down; and then, opening a drawer in his writing-table, he took out a box of cigarettes, helped himself first, at which I was a little surprised, and still more so when he didn't help me second, or at all, but lit a cigarette and put the box back again. I suppose my presumption soared too high in expecting that a full-blown ambassador would condescend to offer me a cigarette, though I had formed the idea that all our diplomats were the very pink of politeness.

The only other full-blown ambassador that I have ever had anything to do with was Lord Dufferin, when he was at Paris; but he was quite different.

I finally won Sir Henry Layard's heart by getting a steam-launch for him, to take the place of the old *Antelope*. The *Antelope* was a very ancient paddle-wheel steamer; too big and much too slow, and was quite useless to the Ambassador, though she was called the Ambassador's yacht. He consulted with me concerning the details of a small yacht which would be of

use to him, and we finally decided upon a sort of glorified steam-launch, with a cabin and certain other conveniences; and after a good deal of correspondence with the Admiralty (which I was allowed to conduct direct, though, of course, sending copies to my Admiral) the glorified steam-launch was sent out, and met with complete approbation.

At the time of my arrival at Constantinople, Hobart Pasha was still alive and was Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Navy. When the Russo-Turkish War broke out in 1877 he was placed in a very awkward position; for as well as being an Admiral in the Turkish Navy he was a retired Admiral in the British Navy, drawing his retired pay; and as we were at peace with Russia, he had to choose between having his name removed from the British Navy list and losing his retired pay, or desert the Turks in their extremity. Of course, he could not do the latter, so he had to submit to the former, as some busybody in Parliament had called attention to his position.

Hobart felt this very deeply, not only on account of the pecuniary loss, but at being removed from the finest service in the world, in which he had spent all the best years of his life. He was one of several young Captains in our Navy who employed their half-pay time in blockade-running to the Southern States during the American Civil War; and at one time he had made a considerable "pile" at this risky business, but lost it all again in his last venture. He found great difficulty in getting his pay from the Turks, but they allowed him a barge's crew of twelve Turkish sailors, with whom he manned a steam yacht, called the *Hawk*, and in her he cruised about the Sea of Marmora in the winter, getting most excellent woodcock-shooting. He knew

all the best places in the Marmora, and was also in communication with the lighthouse-keepers, who used to send him a wire when the woodcock were in at their several districts, and then off he went at once in the *Hawk*. He took me with him once, and we found the covers full of woodcock, and had excellent sport. We had four days at it, and came back to Constantinople with the davit guys festooned with woodcock, *all* of which went to the palace. Hobart knew his Turk; but even woodcock to the palace in the days of Abdul Hamid failed to bring the Pasha's pay with any regularity, though it is highly probable that without this little bribe he would have got none at all.

I think Hobart was the best and quickest woodcock shot I ever saw; but he was a little jealous, and it was not good to walk too near him. It was said that he regarded all the shores of the Sea of Marmora as his special preserves; and I certainly did hear rumours that he was in the habit of sending the officers of the stationnaire to the wrong places and going to the right ones himself; and, indeed, I think it highly probable that when he came across some real bad shots he did do so, on the principle that it was no use wasting good places on them. Nevertheless, I was somewhat surprised one day when he volunteered the remark, "Some people say I send them to the wrong places on purpose. Never did such a thing in my life." To which I made the obvious reply, "Who ever said you did?" But got no answer. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse.*

The winter of 1879-80 was an exceptionally severe one at Constantinople. There had been nothing like it since 1854-55, known in England as the Crimean winter, when our troops suffered so severely in the trenches before Sebastopol. The snow lay in the

streets of Pera and Galata for weeks, without melting or being removed, and all the country around was deep in snow. Our sporting friends of the English colony told us that this sort of weather afforded a splendid opportunity to go to Derkos to shoot wildfowl. They said that all the lakes in the country would be frozen, except Derkos lake, and as this never froze, we should find it covered with wild ducks and have splendid sport. The English Consul and the Vice-Consul both said they were very fond of duck-shooting (N.B.—They couldn't hit woodcock), and that one or other of them would accompany our party to Derkos, which they both knew well, and would act as guide and interpreter for us; so we made our arrangements for the trip, and as it was too cold for tents, we decided to take only blankets and some commissariat stores, and trust to getting some sort of shelter in the native hovels.

The weather was extremely cold, and the day before that on which we had arranged to start both Consul and Vice-Consul jibbed. One said he could not go because the other was going, and the other said he could not go because one was going. I travelled from one to the other several times trying to arrange matters, until it became obvious that neither of them intended to go. They both preferred the fleshpots of Pera to the wild ducks of Derkos; so that I had to cast about at the last moment and look for a guide and interpreter, which was no easy matter; but at last I hired a ruffianly-looking Levantine, who said he could speak English and could guide us to Derkos. He could not do either; but we did not find this out until it was too late to make a change.

We sent our saddle-horses and a baggage-horse up to Therapia the night before, and started at daylight

for that place in the steam pinnace, found the horses waiting, loaded up the baggage-animal, and off we went; but we had not gone far before it became clear that our guide had only the very haziest idea of the route to Derkos. Luckily for us, however, the man who led the baggage-horse proved to be a much better pilot, though even he was several times at fault; and small blame to him, for the snow was very deep, and any path there might have been in ordinary weather was completely obliterated, and landmarks also get much changed in appearance when covered with snow.

The distance from Therapia to Derkos is only thirty miles, but our progress was so slow that it soon became obvious we should take two days to get there; so we steered for a small village called Pyrgos, intending to spend the night there.

Then the baggage-horse got into a snowdrift and cast his pack, and we had a troublesome job getting him out again and reloading him. Then we all got into a snowdrift just as night was falling, and our two guides were busy quarrelling as to which direction Pyrgos lay in.

At this point there seemed to be a very good chance that we should spend the night out in the snow, which would have been unpleasant, even if we had been alive in the morning. We could see nothing around us but a dismal and unending waste of snow, and by the time we had got our horses out of the snowdrift it was dark, and so were our prospects. The situation, in fact, looked quite serious, but it was useless to stay where we were; so after some further argument between our two guides, we set off in the direction indicated by the leader of the baggage-horse as being most likely to lead to Pyrgos, though he did not seem to be by any means certain. So off we went, floundering along

in single line ahead, baggage-horse leading; and after about an hour's time we saw, to our great joy, the twinkle of a dim light in the distance, and another hour brought us to the promised land. But our troubles were not quite over yet. It was now nine o'clock, and the little Greek village of Pyrgos had gone to bed. We rode down the one street, but there was no light in any of the houses; all doors were shut and barred, and it seemed like a village of the dead.

All we wanted was a dry wooden floor to sleep on; so it was—

> "Up the street and down the street, and knocked at every door.
> Give us all the world, Sir, we couldn't find a floor."

But our indefatigable baggage-man was not to be denied. He forced his way into a house at last, told the people that three great Pashas from Constantinople were travelling, that they had lost their way, and that they must have a room to themselves, or else there would be trouble for the village. He then cleared out a family, with all their furniture and belongings, and ushered us into a good-sized empty room, with a moderately clean floor and a good fire burning. So we cooked and ate our supper, rolled ourselves in our blankets, and slept the sleep of the just. Yes, of the just; for, needless to say, we gave the poor people ample compensation for disturbances, and next morning they were all smiles and gratitude, which would scarcely have been the case had we been real Pashas instead of bogus ones.

We made an early start next day, had much the same deep snow to travel through, and, without losing our way this time, we arrived at Derkos village about an hour after dark, and secured a very clean, comfortable room in the house of a polite old Turk, whom we called

"Chelabi," in consequence of his frequent use of that word, which we were given to understand is the Turkish equivalent for " signor," " monsieur," or " gentleman."

Chelabi's house was close to the shore of Derkos lake, and the reader will perhaps remember that the main reason of our trip to this lake was, that we had been told by those who were supposed to know all about it that the lake never froze, that all the other lakes did freeze, and that consequently all the wildfowl in the country were to be found at Derkos. Our consternation, then, may be easier imagined than described when, on looking out of our window next morning, we saw that the lake was frozen stiff, as far as the eye could reach !

After all our trouble to get to Derkos, it did seem hard luck to find the lake frozen, and the Consul and the Vice-Consul were called some hard names. We came to the conclusion—rather hastily, as it turned out—that we were in for a wild-goose-chase instead of a wild-duck battue: but we were wrong.

After breakfast we shouldered our guns and sallied forth. The weather was still very cold, with a strong, bitter north wind, blowing in from the Black Sea. We walked along the north shore of the lake for about two miles, and then came to a large patch of open water, and this was literally swarming with wildfowl. There must have been millions of them.

At this point the lake was only about two miles from the Black Sea, and a little winding river ran out of the former into the latter. There was a ferry, so one of us crossed to the western side, and we all three dug ourselves into the deep snow, partly for shelter from the cutting wind and partly to make ourselves less conspicuous to the ducks.

The first shot put up some ducks, and these flew over our heads towards the Black Sea, keeping more or less to the line of the river, as is their wont. Each succeeding shot put up some more birds, and they all did the same thing; but when they got to the Black Sea they apparently found it was too rough for them, for they all came back again, this time down wind and at a tremendous pace. Truly they were between the devil and the deep sea.

It was cold work, but it was lovely shooting; the best wildfowl-shooting I have ever had in my life. We shot fourteen different species of duck, teal, and widgeon, many of which we had never seen before. Some were of great beauty, and we eventually stuffed some of the rarer species. We lost a good many birds; in fact, most of those that fell in the river were lost; for although we had a retriever, we dare not let her go into the water in such weather, and the ferryman was very old and slow, and with his clumsy boat and still clumsier oars he only succeeded in picking up a few of the birds that fell in the river.

We devoted two days to the ducks, and then, having bagged nearly three hundred, we thought we had enough for all our friends at Constantinople, and we marched on to a place called Mandere, about fifteen miles further west, where we were told there was a good chance of getting a shot at a red deer, which would be driven down from the mountains by the great and unusual cold. We got a local guide, a very intelligent Italian, with the usual long single-barrelled gun, and he shot a red deer (a hind). I did not get a shot, but Mirehouse wounded a stag. It was a close country, with much bush and scrub, but the blood on the snow made it easy to follow the track, which we

did for quite two hours, but never sighted the wounded deer again. It was heavy-going in the snow, and we had on big boots and a lot of clothes, so it is not surprising that we got hot, and finally exhausted, and had to abandon the chase, the bush getting thicker and thicker, and apparently no chance of coming up with the quarry. It was very disheartening, and there is something very pathetic in having to abandon a wounded deer; but there was no help for it. The natives had given in some time before we did, and we were afraid of losing our way and getting lost in the bush.

We returned to Therapia by a different route and a much easier one than that by which we came to Derkos. The first ten miles of our return journey lay along the shore of the Black Sea, upon a beautiful sandy beach. The weather had become much warmer, there was no wind, and it was a delightful ride. Our friends the wild duck had all put to sea; the water was covered with them, and we watched two eagles helping themselves to their share of the ducks. It took them a long time to get a duck; but they persevered steadily, and this was how they did it: They worked separately at two different flocks of ducks, but their method was the same. The eagle would swoop down over a flock of ducks, and all that were anywhere near him would immediately dive, coming up again rather scattered. After this had been repeated two or three times, the eagle managed to separate one duck from all the others, and then by swooping down between him and the flock, he drove him still further away, until he was completely isolated, the flock swimming rapidly in the opposite direction, but never attempting to rise and fly while the eagle was anywhere near them. Once a duck was separated in this manner, his doom was sealed; his

submarine excursions became shorter and shorter, for he was never given time to take breath; and finally, when he could dive no more, the eagle picked him up and carried him off.

After our ten-mile ride along the sands, we struck inland, and soon got into a large oak wood, where we found a herd of swine feeding on the acorns; but they were not the least like tame pigs. They were dark brown and had long hair, or rather bristles; they had long heads, high shoulders, and low hindquarters, and looked for all the world like the wild boar we had been in the habit of shooting in Albania and Asia Minor. They were not really wild; at any rate not very wild, for there were three or four very wild-looking men with long sticks loafing about near them. We had with us a little dog we called Pincher; he was a thoroughbred mongrel, about the size of an Irish terrier. I only gave half a medjedi (two shillings) for him; but he was full of pluck, and had been very useful to us in finding and baying the wild pigs at Ayas Bay. The moment Pincher saw these hairy-looking animals he took them for wild pigs, and rushed at them, barking furiously. This was a little too much for the pigs, and as there were about a hundred of them they evidently thought they were strong enough to take the offensive. There was much grunting and squealing, and apparently some hesitation; and then, as if by word of command, they rapidly formed in order of battle. The front rank consisted of thirty or forty in line abreast, evidently composed of the elder statesmen, with the ladies and children in the rear; and then, with a hideous noise, composed of grunts, snorts and squeals, they charged Pincher. This was all we saw, as after this our backs happened to be turned towards the pigs, for our horses

took fright and in panic fear rushed madly through the forest. They got their bits between their teeth, and nothing could stop them until they got well out of sight and hearing of the charging pigs. It was a most ignominious flight, and if we could have looked behind us I have no doubt we should have seen the swineherds in roars of laughter; but it was no laughing matter for us, as we had all we could do to keep our panic-stricken horses from dashing us against the trees. We lost a few ducks, and I have no doubt the pigs ate them. Brutes like that would eat anything.

When at last we managed to pull up we found Pincher with us; for he too had thought discretion the better part of valour.

We made quite a triumphal entry into Constantinople, with our red deer, and our horses hung round with festoons of wild duck. The people stared and the street-curs barked. Pincher had several running fights and some narrow escapes of being killed and eaten by these mangy, hungry scavengers. We all three carried hunting-whips, and by the free use of these we saved Pincher's life and got him safely on board the *Rapid*. We had plenty of wild ducks, and could afford to be generous; so it was but natural that we should heap coals of fire on the heads of the two Consuls by sending them a goodly supply, and also by giving them graphic accounts of the splendid sport they had missed; though I am not quite sure that this affected them as much as we amiably intended it to do.

During the winter the *Rapid* took several cruises into the Sea of Marmora, to exercise the crew, and Mirehouse and I got some first-rate woodcock-shooting, particularly in the Gulf of Ismid, at Artaki, and at Kara Burnu, near the entrance to the Dardanelles. At one

village near which we anchored there was a wealthy old Turk with a large farm. He said that on many occasions he had received great kindness from the English, and he insisted on sending a present to the crew, consisting of fifteen geese and seventy ducks. I could not very well refuse, as this would have greatly hurt the old man's feelings. I had nothing to offer him in return—after the custom of the East—but I feel sure he did not expect anything. So the ducks and the geese were got on board, and next day the *Rapid* put to sea, and was sailing along gaily under full sail with a nice breeze, going nearly seven knots, when one of the ducks took it into his head to fly overboard, and was immediately followed by most of his companions. They only flew for a few yards, and then began swimming for the shore as hard as they could go. "Hands shorten sail!" "Square the mainyard!" "Call away both cutters!" "Pick up your ducks, my boys!" But there was not much difficulty about this, for by the time the boats got to them they were nearly all drowned! Those that were not drowned were knocked on the head with oars and boat-hooks, and those that did not go overboard promptly had their necks wrung.

Desertion from a man-of-war is always considered a grave matter.

The geese were not such fools. Indeed, I have never thought that geese were fools. Certainly wild geese are not—when you are trying to stalk them.

Constantinople is probably the most cosmopolitan city in the world. For the number and variety of languages you hear, and of costumes you see—some of them very picturesque—it beats any other city that I have ever visited. Everyone seems to do pretty much as they please. On one occasion I rode down the

Grande rue de Pera in full-dress uniform, on a hack-horse, with the owner hanging on to his tail. I was on my way to the Sultan's salaamlik, to be presented by our Ambassador, and nobody turned round to look at me, nor did even the dogs bark, which rather disappointed me. But fancy doing this in Pall Mall, on your way to a levee at St. James's!

CHAPTER VI

HOMEWARD BOUND

In March, 1880, I was promoted to the rank of Post-Captain, after being eight and a half years a commander. This was an unusually long time, as promotions were going at that date; but it was entirely my own fault, for going to such a sloping billet as the *Asia*, moored in Portsmouth Harbour.

However, I had enjoyed three winters hunting with the Hambledon hounds, and now two winters of about the best wild shooting in the world. Nobody could take these things away from me. I had had my fun, and had no cause to grumble. But if it is true that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, it is also true that it is quite possible (in the Navy at any rate) that the opposite to this may be carried too far. In the piping times of peace there is great temptation to do so, especially for those who are abnormally fond of open-air sports, and I must frankly admit that I succumbed to the temptation.

My advice to young commanders is, "Don't slope, but stick to your job." Which sounds quite like one of the moral maxims for a child's copybook. I could write dozens of them. It is so very easy to give good advice, and so very hard to follow it. So that one can quite sympathize with the "merry monarch" who never said a foolish thing and never did a wise one.

As soon as my relief arrived from England I packed

up my traps, said good-bye to my dear little *Rapid*, in which I had spent two such delightful years, generously gave away my bear and my dogs—as I could not take them with me—and started for home. But as I expected to be at least two or three years on half-pay, I was in no hurry to get home, and intended to take it easy, travelling through Italy and visiting some of the cities I had been hearing about all my life, but never seen.

I left Constantinople in the *Pachino*, a very slow and ancient Italian steamer of the Florio Rubitino line, which took ten days getting to Messina, where I got into a fast vessel that took me to Naples. The *Pachino* called at numerous islands in the Ægean and at Smyrna, and for the first few days we were very comfortable, as there were only three or four passengers besides myself. But at Smyrna we embarked a crowd of Greek pilgrims. There must have been nearly a hundred of them, and a more filthy, evil-smelling set of savages I have never come across in all my travels. I had to go below three times a day to get some food; but barring this I lived on deck and slept in the coil of a hawser on the forecastle. Fortunately the pilgrims were only on board for two days, during which there was no rain. Had it been otherwise I feel sure I should have been seasick.

It would be a downright insult to the swine family to call these Greeks pigs.

There was a large United States cruiser lying at Smyrna, and late on the evening of the day on which the *Pachino* was to sail at midnight, I found my way into a gambling-place, in which there were about a dozen American officers. It was roulette, with a roll-up cloth and a rickety-looking spinning affair, and I have little doubt that it was not a permanent

business, but got up specially for the "benefit" of the Americans.

When I arrived there were only two or three playing, and the rest were walking about the room, with their pockets turned inside out, making use of strange language.

I played, and in a very short time I had been allowed to win seventeen pounds' worth of French gold. I say "allowed," as I feel sure the whole business was a swindle, and that I was only used as a bait to try and get the Americans to go on again. However that may be, I stopped playing and said I must leave; but this did not at all meet the views of the rascally-looking Levantine who was running the table. He never intended that I should carry off any of his gold, even after using me as a bait. Ungrateful wretch! But I was firm, and as I saw some whispering going on between the master of the ceremonies and his assistants, I left promptly, and still more promptly when I got to the door; for I ran like a hare until I got to the landing-place, jumped into a boat, and got safely on board the old *Pachino*.

This was the only time in my life that I won, finally, at roulette, and this was in the nature of a mistake, as it was not intended that I should win; but I found seventeen pounds' worth of French gold very useful in Italy.

When I landed at Naples it was the first time I had set foot on Italian soil, though I had already looked down upon the plains of Lombardy from the summit of Monte Rosa, on which occasion I thought I saw Milan. At any rate, I was told that I did, and was quite satisfied.

I do not propose to dwell at any length upon my tour

in Italy, nor to attempt any description of the glorious works of art I saw for the first time in the various galleries and museums which I visited. That has already been done hundreds of times over by competent critics—and others; and as I am not an art critic, my criticisms would be useless, and quite possibly ridiculous. All I can say is, that I was not only not disappointed, but that my most sanguine dreams of beauty were more than realized, both in sculpture and painting. It seems a trite remark to say that copies of pictures give one a very faint idea of the originals. And yet some of the copies are very good. So I think there must be no small share of fancy about our admiration when we *know* that we are looking at the original. Some subtile psychological agency acting on our judgment.

I thought the museum at Naples contained the most beautiful collection of works of art in Italy, with the sole exception of the two famous galleries at Florence.

From Naples I went on to Rome, Orvieto, Siena, Venice, Florence, and Milan, all of which I enjoyed immensely, and I made arrangements for going to Ober-Ammergau, to see the famous Passion play, which was to take place this year—1880.

The first address I left for letters was Milan, as I wished to have a free hand and not be tied to any particular route during my travels, but just go wherever fancy led me. A roving commission, as we call it. So when I got to Milan I found that many of my letters were more than a month old, and amongst them was one from my old naval friend Dick Hamond, inviting me to go to Norway, to fish in the Tana, a river which he had taken for the season, right away round the North Cape.

Salmon-fishing versus Passion play. Salmon-fishing

won easily. So I cancelled my engagements for Ober-Ammergau (finding Cook's people quite reasonable), and started for home immediately, arriving in London in thirty-six hours, only to find that I was too late!

Hamond had waited for nearly a month, and getting no answer from me, he could wait no longer, and he asked another naval friend to take my place. They were just about to start, and as there was only fishing for two, I lost both the salmon and the Passion play.

The greedy dog and the bone once more. I felt sold. But we often find that something we look upon as a misfortune turns out to be exactly the opposite; and so it was in this case, for it is more than probable that if I had been round the North Cape fishing for salmon, my old chief, Lord Clanwilliam (Lord Gilford of the *Hercules*), now a Rear-Admiral, would not have been able to wait for me to get home and go as his Flag-Captain in the *Inconstant*.

So the dog got his bone, and a better one than either of those he had lost.

CHAPTER VII

DETACHED SQUADRON—MONTE VIDEO—THE CAPE

Not long after my arrival in England—as related in the last chapter—I received a letter from Lord Clanwilliam, telling me that he had been designated to take command of a detached squadron of five cruisers, which were to go for a two years' cruise round the world; that the *Bacchante*, with the two young royal midshipmen on board, was to be one of the five; that the *Inconstant* was to be the flagship; and he invited me to be his Flag-Captain, in command of the *Inconstant*.

Here, indeed, was a piece of unexpected luck; for in the usual course of events I should have enjoyed (or otherwise) two or three years of half-pay, kicking my heels ashore doing nothing; and now I was to take command of the largest, fastest, and most heavily-armed cruiser in the Navy, and take part in what promised to be a cruise of exceptional interest. So it is needless to say that I accepted the offer.

As the *Inconstant* was out of commission and would not be ready for her crew for another month, I thought this a good opportunity to get engaged to be married, on the principle that I and my fiancée would not be in a position to get tired of each other for at least two years.

In August I commissioned the *Inconstant* at Portsmouth. The Admiral had, of course, the selection of his own staff, and appointed George Love as his

Secretary, and A. L. Winsloe, an expert signaller, as his Flag-Lieutenant. With regard to who was to be the commander of the *Inconstant*, the Admiral was kind enough to consult me upon the subject; and I ought here, perhaps, to explain, for the enlightenment of those who are not quite *au fait* in naval matters, that the commander of a man-of-war does not necessarily command her. In a small ship like the *Rapid* he does command her, and is then always called the "Captain"; and even a Lieutenant in command of a gunboat is the "Captain"; but the commander of a big ship like the *Inconstant* is the second in command and executive officer. It sounds a little puzzling, but it works very well.

Before the *Inconstant* was commissioned Lord Clanwilliam wrote to me and suggested that I should send him the names of three commanders, and he would send me three names, and then we could make a selection between us. This was done, and the name of Commander A. A. C. Parr was common to both lists, so he was applied for by the Admiral and duly appointed.

Parr was a man who had greatly distinguished himself as a Lieutenant in the *Alert* during Sir George Nares's Arctic expedition. He was one of the Northern party, under the immediate command of the present Admiral Sir A. H. Markham. They had to drag their sledges over extraordinarily rough ice, in their efforts to reach the north pole. They did not reach the pole—as all the world knows—but they made the highest north latitude up to date. Then on the return journey the party was smitten with scurvy. One by one they dropped, until at last half of them were on the sledges, with the other half, nearly as bad, dragging them over the rough ice. They were still a good many miles from

the ship, and at the rate they were travelling it was impossible that any of them could reach the ship alive, unless they either received succour or deserted their disabled shipmates. As the latter was, of course, out of the question, Parr started off alone, and walked for fourteen hours, until he reached the ship in an exhausted condition. A relief party, including a doctor, started immediately, and the majority of the Northern party were saved. I think one or two died, but of this I am not quite sure.

It was a wonderful performance, showing the greatest pluck and determination, by a man already weakened by the exposure, the hardships, and the monotonous food, which had made such inroads on the health and strength of all the Northern party.

Parr undoubtedly saved the lives of his shipmates; but the extraordinary and gallant exertion which enabled him to do so laid in him the seeds of the heart troubles from which he subsequently suffered, and which finally carried him off, though not until he had reached the rank of Vice-Admiral.

I trust I may be forgiven this little digression, in memory of my old shipmate—in two ships—best man at my wedding, and one of the most loyal and most modest men it has ever been my good fortune to meet.

The present Admiral of the Fleet, Sir William May, was the First-Lieutenant of the *Inconstant*. Admiral Sir Percy Scott was the Gunnery Lieutenant, and Admiral Prince Louis of Battenberg, late First Sea Lord of the Admiralty, was another of our Lieutenants. So we were well off for embryo talent, though we soon lost May, on his promotion to the rank of commander.

I commissioned the *Inconstant* at Portsmouth on the 24th of August, 1880; and as soon as the ship was

ready we went out to Spithead. The Admiral joined and hoisted his flag, and we started on our long cruise round the world; only we did not go round the world. Our programme was altered half a dozen times, for various reasons, and the squadron finally broke up at Hongkong. But I must not anticipate. It was a motley and ill-assorted squadron. The Admiralty appear to have chucked into it any ships that they had handy, just to make up the number. There were only two ships in it of the same class, the *Carysfort* and *Cleopatra*. The others were all of different classes. The *Tourmaline* was the oldest and smallest and slowest under sail, generally, though she sometimes shared this honour with the *Bacchante*. The *Inconstant* was more than twice the size of the *Tourmaline*, and the *Bacchante* came about halfway between the *Inconstant* and the two ships of the "C" class. It was a scratch pack, and it was very difficult to keep them together, especially in bad weather.

Our first port of call was Vigo, in the north of Spain, a place that I used to know very well when I served for five years in the Channel Squadron, and where we got snipe-shooting in the winter and trout-fishing in the summer; but all such frivolities were now out of the question for me. Whoever else might have time to go shooting or fishing, it would not be the Flag-Captain. I had made up my mind to this from the first day I accepted the appointment. I had had my fun in the *Rapid*, and plenty of it, and now it was to be hard work and plenty of it.

Lord Clanwilliam was a fine seaman, one of the best that I ever sailed with; so it is not surprising that he made up his mind to make all passages under sail, so far as possible. All the ships of the squadron were

Admiral The Earl of Clanwilliam.

steamers, as well as being full-rigged ships; but it was ever with a groan and a shrug of the shoulders that our Admiral gave orders for the signal to get up steam.

I have already, in my former volume, said so much about the continued cultivation of old-fashioned seamanship in the Navy, the retention of masts and sails in ships from which they ought to have been abolished, and the strange parsimony about burning coal, which still held the field at the Admiralty in 1880, that I will not trouble the reader with any more of it—at least, no more of it than I can help, to explain the current events of our cruise.

It was somewhat unfortunate that the views concerning the general objects of the cruise of the detached squadron held by all the Captains—including the Flag-Captain—were not precisely the same as those held by our Admiral.

It may, no doubt, be said that we had no right to have any views at all upon the subject. That it was simply our duty to obey orders and express no opinion, one way or the other. True, in theory; but unfortunately it is impossible to help having opinions, and it is quite certain that opinions will be exchanged—privately of course—between those holding them. Further, it is equally certain that if all the Captains in a fleet or squadron hold views which differ considerably from those held by their Admiral, it will not be possible to apply to that squadron the happy and oft-quoted phrase of Nelson, "We were a band of brothers."

I do not for one moment mean to suggest that there was at any time, or under any circumstances, anything approaching—even remotely—to discord in the squadron. On the contrary, all the Captains obeyed promptly, loyally, and without a moment's hesitation, every

order given by our respected chief. But situated as I was, I could not help knowing the private opinion of the Captains with regard to the principal aims and objects with which the squadron had been sent upon its cruise, and it grieved me much to know that their opinions differed from those of the Admiral; for I felt that under these circumstances, and without anyone being in fault, there could never be that perfect harmony which we all earnestly desired.

To make a long story short, the Captains thought that the squadron was mainly intended to be an escort to the two young Princes; that we were to sail when we had a fair wind or a leading wind, to steam in a calm or moderate foul wind, to keep to the dates of our programme if it was possible to do so, to spend a good deal of our time in harbour and enjoy the hospitalities which we felt sure would be offered to us, and not to keep boxhauling about at sea for the purpose of teaching the officers and crews all the intricacies of a branch of seamanship which was already moribund, and which would be quite useless in future naval warfare.

On the other hand, the Admiral's leading idea of the object of the cruise may be expressed in fewer words. It was, "To make sailors of them."

This divergence of views placed me in a somewhat delicate position, as it was, of course, my duty to support my chief loyally, through thick and thin; but I also felt that I ought to let him know, as gently as possible, what the Captains thought about the objects of the cruise. At the same time I felt that the Captains—including myself—were working, or rather thinking, very much in the dark, for we were quite ignorant as to what orders, either public or private, the Admiral had received from the Admiralty. To add to which,

it was generally believed that Queen Victoria had herself given some special instructions as to the conduct of the squadron and the status of her two grandsons.

Ever since 1868, when I first made the acquaintance of Lord Clanwilliam and came under his orders as First-Lieutenant of the *Hercules*, I had had the highest admiration for him, not only as a fine seaman, but for his singularly frank, generous, and chivalrous character, which showed itself in everything he said or did; but he had a somewhat bluff manner, savouring of the salt sea; and like many other sailors he was not always as tactful as he might have been. In fact, I think he sometimes mixed up in his mind the word "tact" with the word "finesse," which he hated like poison. He was of an unsuspicious nature, and found it difficult to believe that anybody—and least of all a brother officer—was playing tricks with him, trying to get to windward of him, blarneying him, or in any way taking advantage of his own transparently honest methods of doing business. He said what he meant, and he meant what he said, without reserve; and he thought that it was the business of lawyers, but not of sailors, to use their ingenuity in proving that black is white and white black, and he probably shared with his brother sailors that traditional cat-and-dog antipathy between sailors and lawyers founded at least as far back as the days of the old French war, when the chicanery of the lawyers not uncommonly robbed the sailors of from half to two-thirds of their hard-earned prize-money. So the disinterested reader who is neither sailor nor lawyer will perhaps admit that there is some foundation for our prejudice, and he will not be surprised to hear that the expression, "Oh, So-and-so is a sea-lawyer," is used in the Navy as a term of contempt and reproach.

I have endeavoured above to sketch frankly the leading characteristics of my beloved and respected chief, as they appeared to me, though I am bound to add that the uncompromising honesty of all his dealings, his plainness of speech, and the firmness ("pig-headedness" when you don't agree) with which he stuck to his opinion, in spite of all argument (which he hated), caused him to be frequently misunderstood by some of those who did not know him as intimately as I did, and who failed to appreciate at its proper value his remarkably single-minded, generous, and chivalrous character.

It is time now to return to our cruise. Vigo, as I have said above, was our first port of call; and after the British Consul had called upon the Admiral, it was arranged that the latter, with his staff and all the Captains, were to call next day upon the Governor, who lived about two miles off, in the country; and the Consul said he would arrange for carriages. But next day, when we landed in state—cocked hats and epaulettes—we found that by some misunderstanding there was only one carriage for eight of us, and no time to order another; so it was obvious that four of the Captains would have to walk, and would feel snubbed. The Admiral took in the situation at a glance. He looked up in the sky, which was as black as ink and evidently going to pour rain.

"Ah," he said, "fine day. We don't want a carriage; we'll all walk." And we did, and got a jolly good ducking; but we all got it together, and nobody's feelings were hurt.

Some people probably thought that it was foolish of the Admiral to walk in the rain when he could have gone dry in a carriage. But it did not strike me that

there was anything foolish about it, but rather that it showed an unselfishness and delicacy of feeling which were entirely characteristic of the man, and it had the additional advantage that the Consul was punished for his sins, in not ordering enough carriages, for, of course, he had to walk too. There is a strange satisfaction, logically indefensible, in feeling that the other fellow gets the same punishment that you do.

From Vigo we went on to Madeira, and everyone who could get on shore went for the usual ride up the Mount and came down in those wonderful sleighs with wooden runners bumping over cobble-stones.

Madeira used to be a very sad place, as most of the people one met there were in various stages of consumption, some of them very far gone; but there are now so many places recommended by the doctors for consumptives, that it is not nearly such a melancholy place as it used to be.

When I first visited Madeira, many years ago, there was a somewhat gruesome story current about an old lady who kept one of the hotels there, who had from long experience become such an expert in consumptive cases that all her lodgers had to do was to find out, if they could, the date for which their rooms were let to some newcomer, and then they knew exactly how long they had to live; and it was said that the old lady was never more than a few days out.

From Madeira the squadron went on to that cinder-heap St. Vincent, in the Cape de Verde Islands, a most uninteresting place. We filled up with coal here, and then started for Monte Video. It was originally intended that we should call at Bahia; but as it was reported that there was yellow fever there, Bahia was left out, as also was that most beautiful of all harbours,

Rio Janeiro, where also there was yellow fever, as there nearly always is.

The people of Sydney, New South Wales, claim that their harbour is the most beautiful in the world. It is undoubtedly a magnificent, commodious, and perfectly landlocked harbour; but for real beauty of scenery, Rio takes the palm from all the world's harbours.

When the squadron crossed the line the usual and oft-described ceremonies were duly observed on board all the ships, and the two young Princes did not escape those mystic rites with which Father Neptune has, from time immemorial, initiated all newcomers to the freedom of his dominions.

In due course we arrived at Monte Video, where we found that extensive preparations had been made for offering us lavish hospitalities of all sorts. The only drawback was that the *Inconstant* and *Bacchante* had to lie three miles from the shore, on account of the shallowness of the water. The smaller ships were able to get somewhat closer in: but at the best of times Monte Video is an open anchorage, and even a very moderate wind soon raises a short choppy sea which makes boat-work unpleasant. Nevertheless we made the most of our time and refreshed ourselves on shore after our long sea cruise. There were balls, parties, and dinners, for those that liked them; but the most enjoyable of the entertainments was a trip up-country by special train, to see those wonderful horsemen the gauchos lassoing semi-wild horses and cattle. This was a most admirably organized and successful entertainment. A train composed of restaurant and sleeping cars was placed at our disposal. We left Monte Video at seven p.m., had a sumptuous dinner in the train, turned-in to comfortable beds, and when we awoke in

the morning found ourselves pulled up in a siding, one hundred and thirty miles up the line, with the pampas around us.

Horses were provided for all our party by our entertainers, very good horses with Spanish saddles, but also with those terribly severe Spanish bits, which enable the gauchos to pull up their horses and throw them almost on their haunches with the slightest touch of the reins. These bits may be necessary for the work of lassoing cattle, but they are not pleasant for those who are unaccustomed to them, and have been in the habit of riding with a snaffle, and of obeying (sometimes) the injunction to "'old on by 'is 'ed"; for if they attempt this with the Spanish bit, they will very soon find themselves holding on by his tail—if they can get hold of it.

We rode about five miles to a cattle ranch, belonging to an Englishman who had been in the Navy, but never rose above the rank of midshipman. He received us most hospitably, and had made all arrangements for the entertainment. A large herd of semi-wild cattle and some horses that had never been handled by man, but only seen him in the distance, were driven into an enclosure, and then the fun began. One of the gauchos rode into the herd, and selecting one of the biggest of the bulls, threw his lasso round the bull's head and then proceeded to drag him out of the herd.

It was a wonderful sight, for the bull must have been considerably heavier than both horse and man together; yet by sheer, steady determination and strength skilfully applied by the lord of creation, the bull was pulled out of the herd. Then he charged the horseman; but the latter, instead of riding straight away rode across at right angles to the charge, and by bringing a sudden

strain on the lasso, which was belayed round the high horn of the saddle, the bull was thrown. The horse was perfectly trained, and just before the rope tightened, he leant over to take the jerk and never once was thrown. The bull quickly got up and charged again, and the same thing happened. A wonderful exhibition of skill versus brute strength. Then when the bull was becoming exhausted and demoralized by his own fury, another man, on foot, approached him with the bolases—three brass balls on short traces at the end of a rope. If the bull charged the man on foot, the horseman rode away in the opposite direction and brought him up short, just in time. The two men had the most perfect confidence in each other; and after a few unsuccessful shots with the bolases they finally got entangled round the bull's hindlegs, and he was thrown again. This time he could not get up until he was released, when he showed no malice against anyone, but just slunk off to the herd, apparently half-dazed, with his tail down instead of up.

When three or four bulls had been operated upon in this manner, the gauchos turned their attention to the unbroken horses; and this was quite as interesting as the cattle work.

The horses were quicker and cleverer than the cattle, and in their case it seemed to be more fright than fury. They did not charge, and were easily thrown with the bolases after being lassoed. Some of them were vicious, and others trembled with fear and screamed; but all strongly resented the liberty of a man getting on their back.

As soon as one of these wild young colts was thrown, a man promptly sat on his head, and two or three others proceeded to saddle him as he lay on the ground: he was not bridled and bitted, but a twitch was put round the

lower jaw, which must have been painful, though no doubt necessary. Then, when all was ready, a man got astride of the horse, whose hindlegs were cleared of the bolases; the man who sat on his head got up, and the frightened animal struggled to his feet; but finding something on his back that he had never known before, he tried with might and main to get rid of it. In this, however, he never succeeded, unless he threw himself down, which one or two of them did.

The behaviour of the colts and fillies varied a good deal. Some were quickly tamed, and gave up all resistance; others, again, gave a fine exhibition of bucking and kicking, until they were finally exhausted and found that it was no use going on any longer. It was a fine display of horsemanship by these hardy gauchos, and a lesson in how to stick on, which a good many people would like to be able to do, even under much more favourable circumstances.

All the cattle and horses on a ranch have to be caught once a year and branded with the owner's mark; and, to the best of my recollection, we were told that the horses were often allowed to run wild until they were four-year-olds, and that they were all the better and lasted longer when this was done.

After we had spent two or three hours watching this most interesting exhibition of horsemanship, we rode off some three or four miles to a gaucho camp, situated amongst some bushes, probably for shelter, as there was no shelter on the open plain where we had come from. At this camp we were entertained at a regular pampa lunch, though, as one of our wags truly remarked, we were not pampered. The lunch consisted of carne con quero and mattie. Carne con quero (spelling doubtful), we were informed, means meat in the skin. A bullock

had been killed that morning, and before he had time to get cold he was cut up without being skinned and one of his hindquarters had been placed, skin downwards, over the live ashes of a burnt-out wood-fire, and by the time we arrived at the camp it was said to be just cooked.

Carne con quero did not look at all inviting, but it turned out to be far better than it looked; in fact, when we had got over the somewhat crude, butcher's-shop look of it we pronounced it to be excellent. Perhaps we were hungry; certainly I was. We sat round the huge joint and helped ourselves by digging into it with our clasp-knives and cutting off a chunk. The visitors were supplied with tin plates, but we were told that this luxury of civilization was not in accordance with the custom of the pampas. The joint having been cooked directly the animal was slain, had not had time to get tough, and was as tender as lamb and very juicy. The gravy could not leak out through the hide, and remained in the meat. There were no vegetables with the repast and no bread. Then came the mattie, which is supposed to take the place of vegetables and fulfil the requirements of the human organism, and keep a man in health.

Mattie is made from the leaves of a shrub which grows wild. A large handful of the dried leaves is put into a gourd; boiling water is then poured in, and the beverage is sucked up hot through a metal tube. It tastes something like strong green tea, is very refreshing, slightly bitter, and powerfully astringent. I drank two matties, and was none the worse for it.

Another of the hospitalities which we received at Monte Video was an alfresco dinner, given to the officers of the squadron by the British residents. (I say

"British" because they were mostly Scotch.) It took place under trees in a large garden, a mile or two from the town. It was beautifully illuminated with hundreds of Chinese lanterns hung in the trees. Nearly five hundred sat down to it. The champagne, which flowed freely, got into the heads of a good many of the company, and they became so very hilarious that the Admiral and Captains left early.

I do not remember whether the Princes were allowed to attend this banquet. The stern and judicious Dalton, their tutor and governor, was very particular as to what entertainments he allowed them to go to, and as he was remarkably cute in finding out beforehand what the nature of the entertainment was going to be, it is probable that he did not allow his young charges to go to the alfresco dinner-party.

From Monte Video we went on to the Falkland Islands, with the intention of passing through the Straits of Magellan into the Pacific Ocean; but no sooner had we anchored in Stanley Harbour (since become famous through Sturdee's action) than H.M.S. *Swallow* appeared, post-haste from Monte Video, with a telegram from the Admiralty, ordering us to go to the Cape of Good Hope "with all despatch."

This was the first upset of our programme, but not the last.

The Admiralty telegram did not give us the slightest inkling of the reason for this change in our proposed route, and we were entirely at a loss to understand the meaning of it. Of course, we guessed that there was trouble of some sort in South Africa which required our immediate presence, and the general idea was that the Basutos were on the warpath; but I don't think anyone thought of the Boers. Certainly the Admiral did not.

At any rate, we expected that we should have to land men to fight somebody; so the order was given to all the ships to make preparations for landing small-arm companies and field-guns, without an hour's delay, on the arrival of the squadron at the Cape. We had plenty of time during the passage to complete our preparations. The small-arm men and field-gun crews were drilled and exercised every day, so far as this could be done on board ship. Seamanship took a back-seat, and by the time we arrived at the Cape our little army of marines, small-arm companies of bluejackets, and field-guns, were ready to the last button of the seamen's brown gaiters.

Then the squadron arrived at the Cape, anchored in Simon's Bay, stayed there for nearly six weeks, and never landed a man!

Commodore Frederick Richards, who was then in command of the Cape Station, was round at Durban with his squadron, and we knew that he had landed men to fight the Boers. Still we did not move. Orders from the Admiralty kept us at Simon's Bay. Perhaps our Government was right, for the whole of Cape Colony was in a very restless and doubtful condition. The Dutch element was seething with suppressed disloyalty, and, of course, the protection of the dockyard at Simon's Bay was of vital importance.

One evening the Admiral had a dinner-party, and in the middle of it a telegram was handed to him reporting the disaster of Majuba Hill. Total defeat of the British. General Colley killed, and also Commander Romilly of the *Boadicea*, who was in command of the Naval Brigade.

The sequel of this disaster is now ancient history. Mr. Gladstone sent out a small but sufficient army

under the command of our most able and distinguished General; then he lost heart, changed his mind, and under the specious plea of magnanimity the loquacious and unstable demagogue who then governed the British Empire recalled the army, sold Lord Roberts, struck a staggering blow at British prestige, and sowed the seeds of the great Boer War.

Mr. Gladstone's admirers still speak of him as a "statesman."

After our weary wait in South Africa, the detached squadron sailed for Australia.

CHAPTER VIII

AUSTRALIA—KANGAROO-HUNTING

Not long after leaving the Cape we got into the "roaring forties," and had a strong fair wind all the way to Australia. The roaring forties frequently blow with the strength of a gale, with a heavy, following sea, and the three small ships of the squadron had a very wet time of it.

The *Inconstant* outsailed the other ships in all weather; but with a following gale it was almost impossible to keep her back and avoid running away from the rest of the squadron. Often she would be bowling along with double-reefed topsails lowered on the cup, while the small ships would be staggering under every stitch of sail that their spars would stand.

When we got near Australia, but before we sighted land, we got into an unusually heavy gale, with thick weather. It blew very hard during the night, and next morning the *Bacchante* was not in sight, though the weather had cleared considerably; so the rest of the squadron spread out to look for her, but without success. It was then thought that she had probably gone to the rendezvous, which was ten miles south of Cape Otway and ninety miles from Melbourne; so we sailed on, but on arriving at the rendezvous there was still no sign of the *Bacchante*.

The Admiral was anxious, as well he might be; for if we got within signal distance of any part of Australia,

it was certain that it would be immediately flashed home to England that the squadron had arrived without the *Bacchante*, and this would undoubtedly have caused great alarm.

Under these circumstances the squadron hove-to on the rendezvous, and kept tacking about under easy sail, so as to keep the ships under command, but taking care to keep just outside signal distance from the lighthouse on Cape Otway. This went on for several days, the Admiral getting more and more anxious as time went on and the *Bacchante* did not arrive. He hardly spoke a word, even to answer questions or give an order. He sat silent at meals and scarcely ate anything, so that I began to get nearly as anxious about the condition of my silent chief as I was about the *Bacchante* and her precious freight.

One evening, just before sundown, one of the ships—I think it was the *Carysfort*—got closer in to Cape Otway than usual, and a keen-eyed signalman was able to make out a signal which told us that the *Bacchante* had arrived at St. George's Bay in West Australia with her rudder broken, but otherwise undamaged.

This was joyful news for the Admiral and all in the squadron; so we started at once for Melbourne, arriving there next day. We also had the great satisfaction to know that people at home had been spared from the great anxiety that we had undergone; for, of course, the first they heard about it was a telegram from West Australia, to say that the *Bacchante* was safe in harbour.

On our arrival at Melbourne, the warm-hearted Australians were undoubtedly disappointed to find that the Princes were not with us, for their earnest desire was to show their loyalty to Queen Victoria and their affection for the mother-country; but they did not for

one moment allow their disappointment to abate in the smallest degree the very hearty and lavish hospitality with which they entertained us. Nothing was too good for us, and from the Governor downwards they did their best to spoil us. The officers of the squadron were made honorary members of all the clubs in Melbourne, and were also given free railway passes to travel all over the State of Victoria. Balls and dinner-parties fell upon us like autumn leaves.

Lord Normanby was at this time Governor of Victoria, and his hospitality took the form of allotting rooms at Government House to the Admiral, his staff, and all the captains of the squadron. The room was ours during the stay of the squadron. We could leave our traps in it, and sleep in it or not, as we pleased. All we were asked to do was to write on a slate, kept in the room of the A.D.C., to say whether we were going to dine in or dine out. It was true, practical, and most convenient hospitality, and was very much appreciated.

Lord Normanby had, in his younger days, been a keen sportsman. He knew Canada well, and had been particularly fond of moose-hunting. He had a peculiar way of pronouncing the name of the great elk. He called it " moosh," and was hence known very generally as " Old Moosh."

It had not been intended that we should pay a long visit to Melbourne, but the accident to the *Bacchante's* rudder once more upset our programme, which never again got right; and we had to abandon our proposed visit to New Zealand, which was a great disappointment to that most loyal community and also to us.

The *Bacchante's* rudder was temporarily repaired at Albany, and she then came on to Melbourne and was docked there for permanent repairs, the two young

H.M.S. *Bacchante* at Melbourne.

Princes being transferred to the *Inconstant* until the *Bacchante* was ready again to receive them.

One of the most interesting of the many entertainments which were prepared for us at Melbourne was a trip to Ballarat to explore a gold-mine. It was a quartz mine, as distinguished from an alluvial mine, and was about four hundred feet deep, though they told us that some of the mines went as deep as two thousand feet in following the reef.

The two young Princes were allowed to go on this trip, and there were, of course, great crowds of loyal Australians to look at them. But when we remembered that a few years before our visit to Australia an attempt had been made on the life of their uncle, the Duke of Edinburgh, it was impossible to help feeling somewhat anxious when the crowds became rather thick and decidedly pressing, in their desire to catch a sight of the Princes. There were, of course, detectives accompanying the party, and my loyalty took the form of carrying a short, large-bore, double-barrelled pistol in my outside pocket, on which I always kept my hand in a crowd. I thought it might come in handy, and was prepared to adopt the practice of the Wild West, by shooting through my pocket, if necessary. There were, however, no untoward events; everything went smoothly. We had a most interesting exploration of two of the mines, and were shown all the different processes of mining the auriferous quartz, crushing it, and extracting the pure gold by means of forming an amalgam with mercury and then volatilizing the mercury in hot ovens; but the process has been so often described that I need not trouble the reader by going into details, and, as I am writing entirely from memory, I should probably be guilty of various inaccuracies. But to

the best of my recollection we were told that if three-quarters of an ounce of pure gold could be got out of a ton of quartz, it paid, but less than that did not pay. Also that the quartz mines were much the steadiest in their yield, and the alluvial ones much more of a gamble.

About the only black spot which somewhat marred the enjoyment of our visit to Australia was the crime of desertion. The squadron lost altogether one hundred and thirty seamen. The temptations held out to young men with no very special ties in England were great; and even a few of those who had special ties—such as a wife—decided to remain in Australia, with, of course, a change of name and the desertion of the wife.

That glorious word "freedom" has a good many queer things to answer for, and may even be used—on a pinch—to glorify the desertion of a nagging wife.

The chief of the police at Melbourne told us that nine out of ten of our deserters would be only too glad to get back to their ships again by the time they had enjoyed three months of freedom. The methods of the crimps who induced our men to desert were of a rascally nature. One of them was a faked account of a great gold find in Queensland. The innocent sailor, brought up in the Navy from a boy and with no knowledge of the world, was ready to believe almost anything he was told. He was promised wages beyond his wildest dreams of avarice, and a billet well up country, far from the sea, where no one would know he was a deserter, so that he would never be caught, or even suspected, *if* he would keep his mouth shut; but that was just exactly what the innocent sailor could *not* do, and it always leaked out sooner or later who he was and where he had come from. After this

became known to his employer the unfortunate deserter found that, so far from gaining his freedom, he was more of a slave than he had ever been before—even in the Royal Navy!

The manager of the gold-mine, cattle-ranch, farm, manufactory, or whatever other business the innocent sailor had thought himself specially qualified by his sea training to adopt, had the unfortunate man absolutely under his thumb, to do as he pleased with him. The deserter was his helpless slave. If he asked for his wages, he was told that the less he said about wages the better, for if he gave any trouble on that score he would just be handed over to the police. "I shall get eight pounds reward for handing you over, and you will have the darbies clapped on your wrists, be taken to Sydney, handed over to the senior naval officer there, be tried by court-martial, and probably get one or two years' imprisonment."

So much for freedom!

Some of the deserters in Australia, who found themselves in the hands of unscrupulous employers, found their situation so irksome, so absolutely unbearable, that they came to Sydney and voluntarily gave themselves up and took their punishment.

Desertion is undoubtedly a grave crime, even in time of peace, though I must admit that when trying a deserter who had been fooled away by a crimp, and then came and gave himself up, I always felt rather soft, and inclined to let him off as lightly as circumstances would admit.

The best plan I ever heard of for stopping desertion, was that adopted by the captain of a small ship on the Pacific station. She was lying at Esquimalt—alway a bad place for desertions—and had lost a good many

men, until one day one of the deserters came off to the ship to give himself up. He was in rags, and said he was starving. He was brought before the Captain, who thus addressed him:

"Oh, you say you are a deserter from this ship, do you? Well, we don't know you on board here. You are not wanted. The dingy will now be manned to put you on shore, and if you show your nose on board here again you will be handed over to the police as a rogue and an impostor."

That ship did not lose another man.

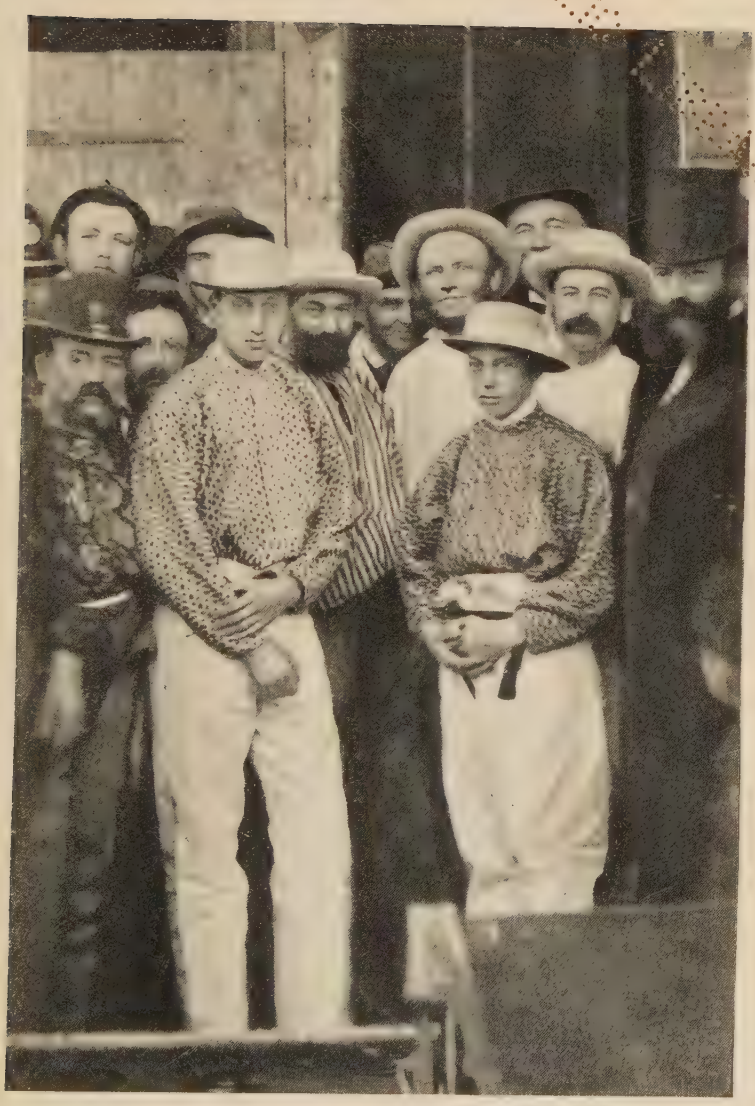
While the *Bacchante* was in dock at Melbourne, having her rudder repaired, the two young Princes were transferred to the *Inconstant*, and we sailed for Sydney with the rest of the squadron.

The people of Sydney did their best to surpass the Melbournites in the lavish hospitalities they bestowed upon us, and it was not their fault if they did not succeed, for the task was impossible. We did not make odious comparisons, but I think most of us were true to our first love, and Lord Charles Scott—the captain of the *Bacchante*—got engaged to be married.

There was one entertainment at Sydney, however—or rather from Sydney—which many of us, who were already surfeited with balls and dinner-parties, did most thoroughly enjoy, and this was a kangaroo-hunt.

The two young Princes were not allowed to go to it, though they would, no doubt, have dearly loved to do so, along with the other midshipmen; but the sage and perspicacious Dalton guessed it would be rather a rough affair, and he was not far wrong.

The expedition to hunt kangaroos was got up, managed, and paid for by three private gentlemen—Messrs. Aarons, Bromfield, and Pope. The scene was near



THE TWO YOUNG PRINCES IN MINING COSTUME. THE ADMIRAL IS ON PRINCE EDDIE'S LEFT.

By gracious permission of His Majesty.

Wellington, a small town about two hundred and thirty miles from Sydney, on the western side of the Great Barrier range, which the railway mounts in zigzags, switchback and change ends.

Mr. Aarons owned an extensive sheep-run of many thousand acres not far from Wellington, and he undertook to provide horses and kangaroos and to entertain us at Wellington. Mr. Bromfield and Mr. Pope undertook the transit, and provided a special train.

Eighty officers of the squadron accepted the invitation; fifty of them were midshipmen, and what a lark they had! In fact, what a lark we all had; for even we elders were not too proud or too sedate to enjoy a wild scamper in the country now and then. We had all been midshipmen once.

The special train—mainly composed of Pullman sleeping-cars—left Sydney at eight p.m., so that we were not able to enjoy the scenery on our way to Wellington, though we saw it all on our return journey by daylight.

We turned in to our comfortable beds, and next morning found ourselves drawn up in a siding at Wellington. Then the fun began. There was only one washing-place in each Pullman for twenty grimy travellers, so some of the party put on clean collars instead of washing; and then we all repaired to various little inns for breakfast, which was provided by Mr. Aarons. There was plenty of everything, mountains of meat being a leading feature of this, and, indeed, of all Australian meals.

After breakfast it was "boot and saddle," though we had no bugler (I think they call him trumpeter in the cavalry) to sound the call. At any rate, we were conducted to a large enclosure, into which about a hundred horses had been driven, and the party were

told to help themselves. The only difficulty was saddles; but our host was indefatigable in beating up the town of Wellington, and the good-natured people came forward and lent freely such saddles as they possessed, some of them being rather the worse for wear and of various shapes and sizes. I think Mr. Aarons was under the impression that some of us at any rate would bring our own saddles; but we had not so understood the situation, though it may perhaps be the custom in Australia.

The police magistrate of Wellington (I have ungratefully forgotten his name) most kindly lent me his best horse, duly equipped, so that I had nothing to do but to sit still and watch fifty midshipmen helping themselves to loose horses. The fun was fast and furious, and why some of them were not kicked into the middle of next week I really do not know, except on the principle that midshipmen bear charmed lives, and that the sweet little cherub that sits up aloft takes as good care of them as he does of poor Jack.

Of course, they were not absolutely unhandled horses, such as we saw on the Pampas in South America, though many of them were little more than half broken. But the lads were not to be denied; they cunningly hunted in pairs, and first caught one horse, saddled and bridled him, "moored" him up to the rails, did the same with a second one, and then tossed up for choice of steeds. They were out for a lark, and they had one.

It took some time getting the whole cavalcade under way; but when they were all ready we started off for the hunting-ground, under the guidance of about a dozen young Colonial sportsmen, who were to tell us what to do during the hunt, and who all rode in their

shirt-sleeves, which appeared to be the correct costume for kangaroo-hunting. All the visitors, however, stuck to their coats, except a few very enterprising midshipmen who did not want to be out of fashion.

The scene of operations was about five miles from Wellington, and the nature of the country might be described as half-open gum-tree bush, varying in density, but generally quite open enough to gallop through; and the preparations for the hunt consisted of a screen of white calico a mile long, pinned up to the trees in a straight line, the top of the screen being about five feet high, but not reaching to the ground by about two feet. At the end of the screen there was another screen at right angles to the long one, but this was only about two hundred yards long. The two screens did not meet by about twenty yards, but they were connected by a low wattle fence, which hid a large and deep pit, in which were stationed four men with bludgeons, to knock the kangaroos on the head when they jumped over the wattle fence and fell into the pit.

As this sounds more like butchery than sport, I must explain that it is, strictly speaking, neither one nor the other, but business. Kangaroos are regarded as vermin. They eat as much grass as a sheep, and they are useless. Therefore, if a man has two thousand kangaroos on his sheep-run, it will hold two thousand fewer sheep. Therefore the kangaroos must be exterminated, which is good logic.

Mr. Aarons expected to wipe off two or three hundred kangaroos from his sheep-run, but he was disappointed, as the sequel will show.

The mounted brigade, consisting in all of about a hundred, were told off in parties of about ten, each of which was under the command of one of the shirt-

sleeve sportsmen; and a line was then formed of the whole battalion, about two miles from the screen, the position of which was, of course, known to our guides, though we did not sight it until within about two hundred yards from it, on account of the thickness of the bush. The line was concave towards the screen, with the wings well advanced, to keep the kangaroos from breaking out sideways; and at first we advanced slowly and silently, keeping a fairly good line, considering that we had had no practice at kangaroo-hunting, and further considering that midshipmen are not of opinion that horses were ever intended to walk, under any circumstances.

Soon we saw several kangaroos hopping along in front of us, and the number increased as we advanced, until there were often as many as twenty or thirty in sight at a time, bounding through the bush, looking more like gigantic birds than animals, as they seemed to fly through the air. The pace was now quickened; the line was closing in on the centre, and we were told to halloo, which we did; but just before we sighted the screen we became aware of music floating through the air, coming from the direction in which we were driving. This seemed to disconcert our guides considerably; but still we rode on, galloping and shouting for all we were worth, with a great drove of kangaroos in front of us. They could have hopped over the calico screen with the greatest ease, as they were jumping twice the height; but instead of doing so, they allowed themselves to be driven along it, towards the trap at the end, where the executioners were lying in wait for them.

The music got louder and louder, until we could distinguish the airs; and it became obvious that we were nearing the climax, as the kangaroos were now

jumping about in all directions, instead of going straight forward. They appeared to be unable to make up their minds whether they would face the music or the line of horsemen, who were now nearly shoulder to shoulder.

It is probable that not even the most venerable and widely travelled of the kangaroos had ever before heard a brass band, with a big drum, playing "A life on the ocean wave" and "Rule, Britannia!" in his native bush. At any rate he made up his mind that he would not face the music, but rather adopt the bold alternative of breaking the enemy's line, which he did, and nearly all the others followed him.

There was a scene of wild excitement. We were all armed with waddies—short clubs like a policeman's truncheon, intended to knock a kangaroo on the head with. The waddie is not intended to be thrown; but they *were* thrown as the kangaroos broke the line, and for a few minutes the air seemed to be full of flying kangaroos and flying waddies. Some of the horses took fright and bolted, and as their riders did not leave room for their own legs amongst the gum-trees, they found themselves lying on their backs, unarmed, and with kangaroos jumping over them, which must have been rather annoying.

It took the still-mounted kangaroo-hunters—of which I happened to be one—some time catching loose horses, and we then returned to see what "the bag" was. It had been hoped that at least two hundred kangaroos would have been slain, but the total number in the lethal pit turned out to be nineteen! Our host, Mr. Aaron, was not pleased, as nineteen kangaroos meant very little in the way of business, and would not pay for the calico, though no doubt it could be used again. But where was he to get another eighty midshipmen?—

to say nothing of the brass band, though perhaps he could do without the latter.

The whole countryside for many miles around had congregated at the trysting-place. The great majority of them had, no doubt, come with the hope of seeing the two young Princes, as it was reported that they were to join in the hunt and to be entertained at the picnic lunch which followed. It was impossible to help sympathizing with these loyal subjects of our gracious Queen, who had travelled long distances from the back-blocks, to see and to welcome her two grandsons, only to find themselves disappointed. But they did not show their disappointment. They were as jolly as possible, and there was plenty of beer to cheer them up. Beer flowed *ad lib.* Many casks had been brought out from Wellington, and Commodore J. C. Wilson, of the Australian squadron, made a speech from the top of a beer-barrel. There was always plenty of speechifying on these occasions.

After luncheon, and speeches, we broke up into small parties, and rode off to hunt kangaroos with dogs; and this was far better fun than driving them, though, of course, the drive would have been better business *if* it had not been for the brass band, the beer, and the loyal sight-seers.

Several of the midshipmen had come croppers, and were more or less hurt. I picked up one boy with a sprained knee and wrist and a dislocated finger, and put him sitting on a comfortable-looking mound at the root of a gum-tree, which, however, contained a colony of bulldog ants, who resented the intrusion, and who—we were credibly informed—would eat him alive in five minutes. So we moved the lad and did not give the ants time to finish him. Then, luckily, a doctor

came by and pulled the finger in again, and we bandaged him up with strips from his chum's shirt, hoisted him on to his horse, and sent him home in charge of the said chum, who had also had enough kangaroo-hunting—for the day.

The hunting with dogs was rather good sport, and quite novel for us. I think the dogs could properly be described as "lurchers." Anyhow, they were some sort of a cross breed that one does not often see. They were fast, and hunted entirely by sight.

Our Colonial friends entertained us with kangaroo stories, one of which related how an old-man kangaroo behaved when cornered and brought to bay. (N.B.—The term "old-man" in Australese simply means big, and may be applied to a drink, a cigar, or even to a good time the backwoodsman may have had in town.)

We were told that an old-man kangaroo, when hard pressed by hunters and dogs, would sometimes take to water, and then—standing in three or four feet of water—turn round and face his pursuers. The dogs in such a case would have to swim to get at him, and as they came within reach he would quietly catch hold of them with his two little fore-paws and hold their heads under water until they were drowned, looking as innocent all the time as a Scarborough bathing-woman sousing children. On the other hand, if he could not find water—which must often be the case in Australia—he might turn to bay on land, and then he would defend himself by striking terrific blows, kicking forward, with the great horny toe of one of his hind-feet, with which, it is said, he can kill a dog or a man or rip a horse. I never saw either of these performances, though I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of our friends' stories. The male ostrich sometimes defends himself by striking

forward in the same manner, and, indeed, there is a great similarity between the foot of the ostrich and that of the kangaroo, with the formidable toenail which they both use for defence.

When we had all had enough kangaroo-hunting we returned to Wellington, where we were entertained at a rough but very substantial dinner, after which there was a ball in the wool-shed.

I did not go to the ball, but sneaked off to my bed in the Pullman car.

The Flag-Lieutenant's description of the ball was very amusing. None of the officers had brought a change of garments, as a ball was about the last thing in the world they expected, so they just had to dance in the same dress they had been riding in. Some of them wore sea-boots, which cannot have been very comfortable to waltz in; but they were out for a lark, and they had one. The company seems to have been rather mixed. Some of the ladies brought their babies, put them down on the floor under chairs while they danced, and then picked them up again and nursed them; but all seemed to have thoroughly enjoyed themselves. I felt quite sorry that I had been lazy and gone to bed instead of going to the ball in the wool-shed.

Our return to Sydney was by daylight, so that we were able to see something of the country. But there is a great monotony about Australian scenery. One soon gets tired of the everlasting gum-trees, with their dull blue-green leaves, hanging straight down, as if they were just going to die. This is one of the anomalies or contradictions of Australia. The others are: The flowers have no scent. The birds have no song. The trees shed their bark instead of their leaves. The animals

fly (the possum) and hop, and the birds run. The rivers have no water in them. Bread-and-butter always falls with the butter side up. There are several other contradictions, but I am afraid I have forgotten them.

According to our original programme—and, indeed, according to the amended one—we were to have paid a visit to New Zealand. But the sudden illness of the Admiral upset, once more, our intended route. Our movements, from time to time, were directed by telegrams from the Admiralty; and it had been known for some time that one of the principal items in our itinerary was a visit to Chefoo, in North China, in order that the two young Princes might visit Pekin and also see the Great Wall of China. But in consequence of various unforeseen delays, by the time we got into northern latitudes and had paid our visit to Japan, it was too late in the season for Pekin and the Great Wall, so we missed these as well as New Zealand, much to our regret.

The Admiral's illness was the most unfortunate and disquieting event of the whole cruise. It was very sudden, and occurred a few days before we were to have sailed from Sydney. The inevitable photographer had come on board the *Inconstant* to take a group photograph of the officers. He had taken one group and we were just posing for a second one, when the Admiral, without saying a word to anyone, first sat down on a gunslide and then fell on to the deck. The doctors put him to bed, and he remained unconscious for many hours. When he recovered consciousness he remained very low and weak and could take no nourishment, so that we feared a fatal result for some days.

At this time Sir Arthur Kennedy was Governor of

Queensland. He was Lord Clanwilliam's father-in-law; and as Lady Kennedy was no longer alive, an unmarried daughter lived with her father and was mistress of Government House. They had been on a visit to the Normanbys at Melbourne while we were there, and we all knew them very well. So I immediately telegraphed to Brisbane and asked them to come down to Sydney, which they did by the first opportunity.

I remembered being greatly struck—when meeting the Kennedys at Melbourne—by the deep devotion of Miss Kennedy to her father. When I saw them together, I was constantly reminded of that beautiful description in the "Lady of the Lake" of the relations between the Douglas and his daughter; and I thought this augured well of the care she would take of her brother-in-law, if she would undertake the duties of head-nurse; and she did. She was duly installed in the Admiral's spare cabin, and took entire charge of the patient. She was worth a dozen doctors, and—to use the language of the Naval Discipline Act—"Under the good providence of God" she saved the Admiral's life.

The only difficulty we had, was to get her away from her patient's bedside, for an hour a day, to go on shore for a walk, to get fresh air and exercise. Her unremitting attention and unselfish devotion to that which she assumed to be her duty was an inspiration, even for those whose watchword is "Duty."

The Admiral got better, and when he was sufficiently recovered we received orders from home to pay a visit to Queensland.

Brisbane, the capital of Queensland, is thirty-five miles up a river, which, strange to say, has some water in it, though not enough for big ships; so the squadron

anchored in Moreton Bay, four miles from the shore, and as the Admiral and all the other Captains went up to Brisbane, and I had to stay and look after the squadron, I never put my foot on shore in Queensland. So, by way of consoling me, my friends told me that it was out and away the most charming and most beautiful country that the squadron had visited. I felt like the tourist who had missed seeing the elephant at Venice.

The squadron only stayed five days in Moreton Bay, and then sailed for the Fiji Islands.

The Admiral's illness and the trip to Queensland put New Zealand out of the question.

CHAPTER IX

FIJI—JAPAN—CHINA—EGYPT

The passage to the Fiji Islands was made, as usual, almost entirely under sail. We took a fortnight to get there, and then anchored in a beautiful land-locked, or rather coral-reef-locked, harbour at the little island of Ovalua, which in 1881 was the seat of Government, since moved to the big island of Viti Lavu, an island about the size of Jamaica. Ovalua was, no doubt, first chosen on account of its good harbour; but it had no other advantages, and was small and infertile—for a tropical island.

The following extract from a letter which I wrote home from Ovalua will give the reader some idea of our visit to the Fiji Islands:

"We had a big dinner at Government House, which is a large shed-like, comfortable, one-storied house. In the afternoon there was a grand ceremony on the lawn. A large space was covered with mats, upon which we squatted in a group, with the Princes, the Governor, and the Admiral, in the centre. And then there were all sorts of curious native ceremonies: Making and drinking of the kava (nasty stuff like soapsuds). Presentation of turtles, yams, coconuts, etc., to the Princes. Then the presentation of a whale's tooth, as an emblem of friendship, by the old ex-King Thakambau, personally, to the Princes; and a long speech by the same old gentleman, in Fijian, which sounded very well translated. Then all the principal

chiefs were presented to the Princes, and walked up one by one and shook hands with them, behaving themselves in the most perfectly courteous and dignified manner, as if they had been accustomed to it all their lives—in marked contrast to the behaviour of English snobs under similar circumstances. Then after dinner there were native dances by moonlight, and the *Inconstant* turned her electric searchlight on to the scene, which produced screams of delight and astonishment. It is difficult to realize that these mild-eyed, amiable-looking Fijians were, thirty years ago, about the most bloodthirsty cannibals in the Pacific Islands. The missionaries have certainly done wonders here. Nearly all the Fijians are Wesleyans, and, we were told, very good ones. They have given up all their bad habits, notwithstanding that they are governed almost entirely by their native chiefs—subject, of course, to the English Governor, who has very arbitrary powers, one of which is that he can banish any objectionable white man from the islands without trial or bother of any sort."

Obviously, all that the Fiji Islands wanted was a dozen or two chattering lawyers, to take the part of the objectionable white man, with his trade whisky and other luxuries, to defend the poor fellow against the arbitrary acts of the Governor, and thus produce an ideal state of harmony, peace, progress, and perfection. Though, on the other hand, some old-fashioned people may still hold the opinion that there are sharks enough amongst the Pacific Islands already.

After a short but pleasant stay at Ovalua, the squadron sailed for Japan, and in a few days ran into the belt of calms on the Equator, where the weather was very hot, as it generally is in latitude 0°.

Then one evening after dinner, while we were still becalmed, the Admiral had a sudden relapse, much like his former illness. The doctors said it was due to the

heat. They thought his condition very serious, and said that the only chance of saving his life was to get into cooler latitudes as soon as possible. So I suggested to the Admiral, who was very low and weak, but quite conscious, that I should make the signal to get up steam and steam to northward.

The answer I got was: "No. The squadron was not sent on this cruise to steam, but to sail, and exercise the men in seamanship." To which I replied that we couldn't sail without wind, and there could be very little exercise in seamanship in a calm, with the sails flapping against the masts. But it was no good. He would not let me get up steam.

The weather got hotter and hotter, and the doctors again warned me that they would not be responsible for the Admiral's life if we remained many more days in that great heat. "But," they added, "he is in a very nervous and irritable condition, and it would be equally dangerous to go against his wishes or to disobey his orders."

Here was a pretty fix! If I didn't get up steam it would kill the Admiral, and if I did get up steam it would kill him. So I went to him again and told him exactly what the doctors said, without mincing my words.

The answer I got was: "My life has nothing to do with it. If I die, Lord Charles Scott (Captain of the *Bacchante*) will take command of the squadron. But not while I live. The routine of the squadron must not be put out on my account, or because my life is in danger."

It looked like checkmate; but I thought of a plan, and carried it out. I could not get up steam in the *Inconstant* without the Admiral knowing it, as he would

H.M.S. *Inconstant.*

hear the buzz of the boilers and the lowering of the screw. So I made a signal to the squadron to get up steam, and then to the *Bacchante* to take the *Inconstant* in tow; and off we went gaily to the northward at eight knots an hour.

This went on for twenty-four hours before my dear old chief found out the trick I had played him. He was very weak, but managed to raise himself in his cot, looked out of the port, and saw that the ship was gliding along in an oily calm without any screw working. So he rang his bell and sent for me. He was very angry, and we had an unpleasant five minutes; but, as he gave no direct order to stop steaming, I let everything alone, and next day we got into a nice cool breeze and made sail.

The Admiral got rapidly better, and when it was all over he made such a full and kindly apology to me, for what he called his cross and unreasonable remarks, that he brought a lump into my throat. He thanked me warmly, and said I had acted in every way for the best in a difficult and trying position—thus giving me one more proof, had I wanted one, of his chivalrous and generous character.

The squadron arrived at Yokohama on October 21st (Trafalgar Day), 1881. This was my second visit to Japan, as I had been there in the old *Retribution*, attached to Lord Elgin's mission, in 1858, as recorded in my former volume. The change which had taken place in twenty-three years was marvellous. Foreigners were welcomed, instead of being rigidly excluded; a great European and American settlement had sprung up at Yokohama (formerly Kanagawa); and Japan—having passed through her great revolution, abolished her Shogun, united her great feudal, semi-independant

clans, and released her Emperor from his virtual imprisonment at Kioto—was taking her first strides in that truly wonderful transformation which brought her, in another twenty-five years, into the ranks of the Great Powers of the world, both naval and military, and made her virtually mistress of the Far East.

Can China do anything like it, and then, with her teeming millions, rob Japan of her hegemony of the Yellow Sea ?

I think not, but I decline to prophesy. At any rate, Japan's position, with a sufficient navy, is impregnable.

On our arrival at Yokohama, we found the Commander-in-Chief of the British China Squadron lying there in his flagship. He had heard of our Admiral's illness, and had very kindly and with great consideration hired and prepared a comfortable little house as a sanatorium for our Admiral, whom he strongly recommended to go on shore and recruit his health, and take further medical advice—meaning, of course, the advice of the Fleet-Surgeon of his flagship. Our Admiral turned the matter over in his mind, and finally came to the conclusion that, if he left his own flagship and took up his quarters on shore, his senior officer might order a medical board to sit on him, and invalid him home to England against his will. As long as he remained on board the *Inconstant* he was safe, and nobody could touch him, as there were strict orders from the Admiralty that he was not to be interfered with—in his command of the Detached Squadron—by any senior officer whom he might meet during our cruise. So he firmly declined to go to the sanatorium which had been prepared for him with so much care and forethought. And I have no doubt he was right.

The two young Princes, with their tutor and all the

Captains of the squadron, except myself, went up to Tokio (Yeddo), and were presented to the Mikado. I had to stay at Yokohama to look after the squadron. This was the second time I had been quite close to Tokio; yet I had to wait for another seventeen years before I saw that picturesque city. Though by that time (1898) it had become far less picturesque, but more business-like, than it had been.

Then the Mikado came down to Yokohama and went on board the *Bacchante*, and returned the Princes' visit; but, as our Admiral had not been able to go to Tokio to pay his respects to him, he did not come on board the *Inconstant;* of which I was secretly very glad, as I was able to take a day off and sail one of the *Inconstant's* cutters in an international boat-race, which I won.

After the Mikado had honoured the squadron with his visit, we went on to Kobe, and then through the Inland Sea to Shimonoseki.

At Kobe I made the acquaintance of the English chemist, Mr. Sim, who, I found, was one of the leading men of the foreign colony. He was president of the yacht club, stroke oar of the champion four-oared boat, a good shot, and a worthy representative of England in the Far East. He had a couple of good dogs, and he invited me to go out woodcock-shooting with him, which, of course, I did. But, unfortunately, there had been no snow in the hills, and the woodcock were not at home. Our bag was two woodcock, three and a half couple of snipe (the beautiful painted snipe), two pheasants, and two foxes (!) shot by my friend. I had been strictly enjoined to shoot foxes; but somehow or other, whenever I got a chance of doing so, my gun always missed fire.

Our passage through the famous Inland Sea was somewhat marred by rain and mist, though at intervals we got fine views of its placid and unique scenery, so often described by the artistic globe-trotter—though, as I think, seldom or never exaggerated.

After passing through the narrows at Shimonoseki, the squadron went on to Shanghai; or, rather, as near to Shanghai as they could get, which, for the *Inconstant* and *Bacchante*, meant Woosung, twelve miles from Shanghai. They were too deep for the bar of the Woosung River; but the three small ships went right up, and anchored off the town.

I had a very pleasant little holiday at Shanghai. A shooting trip for the two young Princes and some of their shipmates was arranged, to go fifty or sixty miles up the Woosung River to shoot pheasants.

Lord Charles Scott was to have gone in charge of the party; but a prospective court-martial, over which he had to preside, prevented him from going, and I—nothing loath—took his place.

We were a party of eight, and we lived most luxuriously in four river houseboats, two in a boat. Dalton was one of the party, but he did not shoot. We travelled at night, towed by a powerful steam-launch, secured to the bank of the river in the morning, landed and shot all day, dined all together in one boat, and then retired to our comfortable beds in our own boats, and either moved on again at night or stayed where we were, if we found we were on good ground.

One of our party was Mr. Carles, the British Vice-Consul. He was interpreter and general guide and manager of the expedition; he also took his own Chinese cook and personal servant as waiter, and we lived like fighting cocks. In some of the places we stopped at

THE HOUSE-BOAT IN WHICH THE YOUNG PRINCES WENT SHOOTING FROM SHANGHAI.

From a sketch by the author.

the pheasants were fairly plentiful, and in others they were scarce and hard to get up. They ran like hares through the cotton-fields, and we had no dogs. There were also a few quail and some of the little hog-deer, not quite as big as hares.

Neither of the young Princes was a good shot at this time, though Prince George was much the better; and, though quite a boy, he made second-best score of the whole party of seven. His present Majesty shot his first deer on this occasion, and, although it was no bigger than a hare, I believe he was as proud of that deer as he has been of any antlered monarch of the glen that has since fallen to his rifle.

I have been told that His Majesty is now a first-class shot. He had it in him as a boy.

Altogether we had a most enjoyable trip. The weather was cold and bracing, we got plenty of exercise, the life was a complete change from ship-life, and we slept warm and comfortable on board our house-boats. And, although we made a very poor bag, we let off plenty of cartridges.

From Shanghai the squadron went on to the Chusan Islands, where there is a good harbour for big ships, the nearest (twenty-five miles) to the great city of Ningpo, which, it had been decided, the Princes were to visit. They went up there in the paddle-yacht *Vigilant* with the Admiral and some of the Captains. I stayed at Chusan to look after the squadron.

Late one evening the Gunnery Lieutenant (the present Admiral Sir Percy Scott) came to my cabin and informed me, in a stage whisper, "I know where there are wild geese." "All right," I said; "when shall we start?" "Two hours before daylight to-morrow morning, as I think some of the other ships know about it,

too." I ought here to explain that when ships are cruising in company, and anchor at a likely place, if anyone discovers sport of any kind, it is a point of honour that he confines the knowledge to his own ship. The other ships of course do the same; and although it is perfectly legitimate to "cut out" another ship, you must never cut out your own shipmates. This is thoroughly well understood, and the cutting out is done in a friendly spirit of rivalry, and often gives rise to amusing incidents, especially when some particularly enterprising sportsman exercises his strategy by laying a false scent.

Accordingly, next morning, two hours before daylight, I started in my gig, with Scott and Bishop, our young Marine Artillery officer. We had a long row in the dark, no lights to guide us, and Scott lost his bearings. So we decided to land on one of the small, steep, rocky islets, amongst which we were navigating, and climb to the top of it to see if we could make out where we were. We had just reached the summit, very much out of breath, as day was breaking, and at the same moment we became aware of the cackle of geese quite close to us. Three wild geese flew over our heads, low down and well within shot. "Oh, I'm not loaded!" says Scott. "Oh, I'm not loaded!" says Bishop. I fired both barrels, and Bishop managed to cram in a cartridge and fired one. Scott did not fire. One goose fell and we got him. We didn't get another shot, though we chased wild geese until it was noon and time to go back to the ship for the men's dinner.

> "He that will not when he may,
> When he will, he shall have nay."

The squadron went on to Hongkong, and there it finally broke up. The *Bacchante* and *Cleopatra* sailed

for the Mediterranean via the Suez Canal; and Lord Clanwilliam—who was still far from well and not getting any better—at last allowed the doctors to invalid him, and sailed for Europe in a French mail-steamer. Twenty-four officers of the *Inconstant* rowed him to the mail-steamer in a twelve-oared cutter, double-banked. He wanted to make a little speech to the ship's company, to say good-bye to them; but he was very weak, his nerves were completely shaken, and when it came to the point he quite broke down. It was a sad parting, and I never expected to see him alive again. But he recovered almost completely when he got home. I sailed with him once more as his Flag-Captain, and he finished his naval career as Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth—the top rung of the ladder—and then became an Admiral of the Fleet.

After the break-up of the squadron, the departure of our Admiral, and the uncertainty of our future movements, we felt like the Queen of Sheba—there was no more spirit left in us. Or like Colonel Starbottle (what a jump !)—but *was* it Colonel Starbottle ?—who met with an accident, and " the subsequent proceedings interested him no more."

The orders for the remnant of the squadron—*Inconstant*, *Carysfort*, and *Tourmaline*—were to remain at Hongkong until the arrival of Admiral Sullivan from England, who was to hoist his flag in the *Inconstant* and take the three ships home round the Cape. This was rather hard on the two small ships, which could have easily got through the Suez Canal, though the *Inconstant* was doubtful; and it did seem rather absurd to treat three ships of totally different classes as a squadron, requiring an Admiral to take care of them.

The rudder of the *Inconstant* had for some time been making very curious noises when we were at sea and there was much motion; so we sent the diver down to see if he could make out what was the matter, and he reported that there was more than half an inch play in the lower journal. The rudder was what is known as a balanced rudder; it was a gunmetal casting, weighing seventeen tons, and had only two bearings, one at the top and one at the bottom. It was obvious, therefore, that, the bottom one being loose and rattling about, the rudder-head would break sooner or later, and the rudder go to the bottom of the sea. I was ordered by the Commander-in-Chief (Sir G. O. Willes) to unship the rudder and land it at Hongkong dockyard. The dockyard authorities reported that there was nothing the matter with the rudder (which was technically true, so far as the rudder itself was concerned), and I was ordered to ship it again; which I did. But I was still convinced that, if the lower bearing was not rebushed, the ship would lose her rudder the first gale of wind she got into. So—to make a long story short—after much argument, it was decided that the *Inconstant* must be docked and the lower journal rebushed; but, as there was no dock either at Hongkong or Kowloon deep enough to take her, we had to go back to Japan and dock at Nagasaki! And this was in 1882, before Japan had a navy.

Our own Chief Engineer, Mr. John Ferguson, took the matter in hand, made a perfect job of it, and we had no further trouble with the rudder. It was not his duty to have anything to say about a rudder. The rudder is in the carpenter's charge, as every schoolboy knows; but Mr. Ferguson was one of that class of engineers of the old school who never say "Not my

duty." They don't know the meaning of the words. Nothing connected with the welfare of the ship in which they sail is not their duty. I have been shipmates with several of these men. They are generally Scotchmen. Clever, resourceful, unassuming, dogged, determined men, not to be beaten by any job, no matter how difficult it may look. Many a time have I known the Chief Engineer sent for (and done it myself) about matters entirely unconnected with his own department—anchors and cables, guns, even work aloft connected with the rigging and sails; and never have I known him demur, or even hint that it was the duty of the gunner or the boatswain, and not his.

It will be interesting to see if the new much-educated engineer, with his vast theoretical knowledge, will be equally resourceful, and equally willing *and* able to tackle any and every job that may come in his way.

All ships have their own special peculiarities, and one of the *Inconstant's* peculiarities was that, when weights were taken out of her, she drew more water than she did before they were taken out. For instance, before going north to Nagasaki to dock, we landed all our guns and ammunition at Hongkong, and the ship then drew several inches more water than she did before. She simply "sat down" aft, and her bow cocked up in the air. Though, of course, we had the power of trimming her by moving weight forward, or filling the foremost compartment with water, which we did before docking.

We got back to Hongkong before Admiral Sullivan had arrived from England, so that I had time to get in coal, guns, stores, etc., and get the ship more or less ready for him. The passage from Nagasaki was made

under sail, very rapidly, before a strong N.E. breeze, and, as I did not care to attempt the Lye Moon passage under sail, I went round to the western entrance, and determined to beat into the anchorage, just to show the China squadron (of course I mean the British China squadron) and a French frigate, that was lying in harbour, what fine sailors we were. But, alas! pride had a fall. The ship was flying light and out of trim, and I did not make sufficient allowance for these things. When in trim, the *Inconstant* was as handy as a jolly-boat, and one could do anything with her; but on this occasion she got very nasty about it, and was uncommonly slow about coming up to the wind when the helm was put down, notwithstanding a commanding breeze and smooth water. We made eight tacks, and then fouled a merchant-ship and carried away her mainyard. After which I anchored, got up steam, and steamed ignominiously into the anchorage.

I expected to get some cold tongue from Admiral Willes when I went on board his flagship to report myself, as I had often heard that he was a remarkably good hand at serving out cold tongue; so I was very agreeably surprised to find him in the best of humours, greeting me with—"It did my heart good to see you beating that great ship in through the crowded anchorage. I was watching you all the time, and I could see how greatly out of trim the ship was, and how sluggish she was in coming up to the wind. Of course it was risky under the circumstances; but we all run risks sometimes, and that's better than undue caution. I wish the Captains of my squadron would handle their ships a little more under sail. They are all too cautious. Never mind about the merchant-ship's mainyard; we'll make her a new one in the dockyard."

So I got off far better than I expected, or perhaps deserved.

As soon as Admiral Sullivan arrived and hoisted his flag in the *Inconstant*, the residuum of the Detached Squadron sailed for England via the Cape of Good Hope.

Nothing of interest happened during our voyage to the Cape; though I remember we passed close to the steep, rocky little island of Krakatoa, in the Straits of Sunda—an island that, a few years afterwards, was blown to smithereens by an earthquake and terrific volcanic eruption. Concerning which some sensational descriptions of the cataclysm appeared in the newspapers, from ships in the vicinity at the time. I remember how a captain of a sailing-ship described that he was becalmed about twenty miles to the eastward of Krakatoa, when suddenly he heard loud explosions; then it became almost quite dark, at two o'clock in the afternoon, and finally a rain of boiling mud fell upon his deck, so that they had to take shelter below.

No wonder the unfortunate man thought the end of the world had come.

Once more the *Inconstant* found herself lying in Simon's Bay; and this time she very nearly left her bones there.

I was dining on board the *Carysfort* one evening with Captain Stephenson, when a signal was made by the *Inconstant*, "Ship on fire!" Of course I hurried on board at once, and found that the ship was badly on fire in the officers' storeroom flat, and there was such a dense smoke that nobody could get near the fire. The only thing to do was to turn on all the steam and hand pumps and flood the compartment. But what was my horror when it was reported to me that the manhole doors of the screw alley were off! (this is rather technical,

but it meant that there was free connection with two other compartments), so that, in order to drown out the fire, we should have to flood three compartments instead of only one; and it became a question of whether the ship would float with three compartments filled. Burn or sink—which was it to be?

But, besides this choice of evils, there was another and more immediate danger. The iron bulkhead of the next forward compartment, in which was situated the after-magazine, had become so hot that I could not bear my hand upon it. It was decided to flood the after-magazine and shell-room, and thus destroy half the ammunition in the ship; but this was better than all going up together, ship and all. Though, as there were two Rear-Admirals and three Post-Captains on board, we should have made some welcome vacancies.

By two o'clock in the morning the stern ports of the *Inconstant* were only about a foot above water, but the fire was out; so we set to work to pump the compartments out again, and had quite a night of it.

Next morning there was a pretty kettle of fish. Everything perishable, including all the biscuit, had been destroyed by salt water, and there was an indescribable mess. Not only the officers, but large numbers of the ship's company, had spent their spare money in Japan upon objects of art and utility, for which that country is famous; and nearly all these cherished presents for mothers, sweethearts, and wives, were destroyed, the crockery alone escaping. It was a sad sight to see poor Jack opening his parcel and finding his treasures scarcely recognizable.

This unfortunate fire—the origin of which remained a mystery—delayed us at the Cape for nearly three weeks, and thus eventually caused us to be late for the

bombardment of the Alexandrian forts; though, of course, nothing of that sort was suspected at the time.

After leaving the Cape, on our supposed homeward voyage, our first call was at St. Helena; where we stayed for a few days, and, of course, rode up to Longwood.

From reading accounts, from various sources, of Napoleon's imprisonment at St. Helena, I had long held the opinion that the English Government treated their fallen foe with an utter want of magnanimity, consideration, and respect, which they might very well have shown him, without the slightest danger that it would add to his chance of escaping; but when I saw the wretched dog-hole of a shed which was provided for the accommodation of himself, his faithful followers, and his servants, and in which they had to live for nearly six years, I realized fully the extent of the meanness, the harshness, not to say cruelty, with which the great man—for he was a great man, though an enemy—had been treated by England.

The selection of Sir Hudson Lowe as gaoler to Napoleon was, to say the least of it, unfortunate.

He seems to have been a man of mean and vindictive character, without a spark of chivalry or nobility in his composition, ready to carry out his orders from the Home Government in the most oppressive, disrespectful, and inconsiderate manner that his pedantic and ungentlemanlike nature could translate them, those orders being in themselves mean and financially stingy and shabby to a degree quite unworthy of a great nation on the morrow of victory. Even if we allow something for exaggeration in O'Meara's narrative of the captivity of the greatest soldier and one of the ablest law-givers that ever lived, it is impossible to look back upon Napoleon's treatment at St. Helena without feel-

ing that the word "ungenerous" is far too mild an expression.

The subsequent surrender of his dead body to the French nation was scarcely a sufficient apology for the vindictive treatment he suffered during his captivity; though it was the only one available.

From St. Helena the squadron made the best of its way to St. Vincent, in the Cape de Verd Islands. And it was during this passage that a very remarkable zoological event occurred, the like of which I had never seen, nor even heard of, before. We were sitting at dinner in the Admiral's cabin, when there came through the ports a shoal of flying squid. One nearly hit the Admiral in the eye, striking his cheek with great force and leaving a mark there, and about a dozen of them were lying on the deck of the cabin. The creatures were between four and five inches long. They had no wings; but there was a thin membrane which projected on both sides, and extended from near the head to the tail. The ports through which they came were twelve feet above the water. We preserved some of them in spirits, and the scientists declared them to belong to a somewhat rare order of Cephalopoda. They must have been either attracted by the lights in the cabin or pursued by an enemy—perhaps both.

At St. Vincent we first heard that there was trouble in Egypt; so we filled up with coal and went as fast as we could to Gibraltar. But we had a foul wind nearly all the way, and as the *Tourmaline*, with her worn-out boilers, could not keep up, we had to tow her most of the way, which delayed us considerably.

At Gibraltar we met the Duke of Edinburgh, in command of the reserve squadron of eight ironclads. The Duke of Connaught was cruising with him, but hurried

home overland to join his Guards brigade and come out to Egypt with Sir Garnet Wolseley's army to finish up the job at Tel-el-Kebir.

We filled our bunkers at Gibraltar, and went full speed to Malta, where we learnt that we were late for the bombardment, and that Sir Beauchamp Seymour's ships were short of ammunition. So we took in a heavy load of this and went full speed to Limasol in Cyprus, and then to Alexandria, where we found the fleet and delivered the goods.

It is not my intention to give any detailed account of the operations in Egypt, which left us no choice but to become solely responsible for the government of that country, and finally that of the Soudan also, after Gordon had been betrayed by Mr. Gladstone, in much the same shuffling, pusillanimous spirit as that in which he had betrayed Lord Roberts and British interests in South Africa after Colley's defeat at Majuba. In both cases his " statesmanship " was followed by its Nemesis, involving much bloodshed and vast expense.

The Egyptian campaign of 1882 is now ancient history. The *Inconstant* took very little part in it, except to keep a few of Arabi's troops tied to Kafre Dowr, and to act as a blind while the rush was made on the Canal. Though it was at Alexandria, on this occasion, that our Gunnery Lieutenant, Percy Scott (he of the wild-goose chase at Chusan), first showed his ingenuity in mounting heavy ship's guns on extempore field carriages, a service which he repeated with such excellent results some years later in South Africa, when he commanded the *Terrible*.

Admiral Sullivan went round to the Canal, and we saw him no more. And as soon as the Egyptian business was finished, I was ordered to take the *Inconstant*

home to England and pay her off at Portsmouth; which I did in October. It was absolutely necessary to pay her off, as she had become what is now known as "insanitary."

When the three after-compartments were flooded to extinguish the fire—as recorded above—quantities of bread dust and other foreign matter got washed down into the bilges, and lodged in all sorts of places where it was impossible to get at it, without removing the lining and all the fittings—in fact, without completely gutting the after-part of the ship; and as this would be a long job, and could not be done while the ship was in commission, there was nothing for it but to pay her off.

The following extracts are taken from a leaflet, "Notes on the Detached Squadron," which I circulated privately amongst my brother-officers:

"The Detached Squadron has not been a success, unless it be considered simply as an escort to the Princes during their visit to Australia and Japan; but as a training school for officers and men it has not been successful—that is to say, it has not trained them nor exercised them in subjects which would be useful to the country in time of war.

"Sending steamers which sail badly to make long sea-passages under sail is inconsistent with the spirit of the age and with the rapid mode of progression which is now universal; it is a waste of time, and both officers and men know this and it disgusts them. The men read much more now than they used to do, and they know quite well that a high state of efficiency in shifting topsails will be of no use to them in war-time, nor enable them to fight their ship any better than if they had never seen a topsail yard in their lives.

* * * * * *

"The junior officers of the late Detached Squadron spent far too much of their time with the naval in-

structor, studying abstruse theoretical problems, and preparing themselves for examinations in subjects which will be of very little use to them as naval officers.

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"Time and study would be better employed in learning steam, practical engineering, ship-building, metallurgy, electricity, torpedo work, and subjects of this description, which would be equally good as a mental gymnasium and would be eminently useful to them in their future careers."

There is a good deal more in my notes to the same effect; but I will not inflict any more of it on the reader, as it is all rather technical.

Shortly after the *Inconstant* was paid off, I got married, and solved once and for all the great problem which has puzzled the princes, the governors, the captains, king's councillors, magicians, astrologers, philosophers, and soothsayers, of all the ages—the great problem of How to be happy though married.

CHAPTER X

GREENWICH—R.N. COLLEGE

After honeymooning in the Riviera during the greater part of the winter of 1882-83, and paying visits to friends in Ireland and England, my next appointment was to what we call a "shore billet"—viz., Captain of the Royal Naval College at Greenwich. Which—as all the world knows—is now established in those four stately and beautiful buildings formerly known as Greenwich Hospital. But as I am only professing to write memories of the sea, and not of the shore, I do not propose to dwell at any length upon the two happy years I spent in this appointment.

I had had two years' really hard work as Flag-Captain in the Detached Squadron, and I was glad of a rest, which I thoroughly enjoyed. My duties were light. Admiral Luard was President of the college, and my appointment was for discipline—*i.e.*, to keep the Sub-Lieutenants and other junior officers in order. The other junior officers—marines and engineers—did not give much trouble, but the Sub-Lieutenants did.

The sudden change from the strict discipline of a ship of war in full commission, the restricted area of a midshipman's mess, and the constant and watchful care of senior officers, to the greater freedom—a large mess, a room to himself—and the general conditions of a college student within easy distance of London, was

too much for the self-restraint, good sense, and discretion, of a large number of the acting Sub-Lieutenants who came to Greenwich to study for their final examination in mathematics, which they had to pass before becoming full-blown Sub-Lieutenants.

We all pray that we may not be led into temptation; but the system which prevailed at Greenwich during my term of office (1883-1885) was a deliberate leading into temptation of all our future executive officers at a time of their lives when they were most likely to fall into it. The great majority of the lads came to Greenwich with the sole idea of having a jolly good time—a free sheet and a flowing sail—as an interlude to constant sea-service, coupled with the good intention of doing just enough work to be able to scrape through and save their bacon with a third-class certificate at the final examination. A large majority accomplished this feat, though some fell short of it.

During ten years of the system, the results were as follows:

First-class certificates	74
Second-class certificates	205
Third-class certificates	424

And 46 plucked.

Quite probably some of the forty-six were dunces, and were unable to attain to the very low standard in mathematics which would have given them a third-class certificate, though, on the other hand, it is well known that all men do not possess mathematical minds—men which no amount of study will ever turn into mathematicians, but who may nevertheless be gifted with other qualities of mind and body at least as useful to a naval officer as mathematics.

It seemed to me to be quite unreasonable to turn a lad out of the Navy because he failed to pass an examination in a non-nautical subject; though it would be proper to pluck him if he failed to come up to a certain standard in such subjects as seamanship, practical navigation, or gunnery.

On one occasion when I overhauled the examination paper (though I had really nothing to do with it, as I was only appointed for discipline), I found the following question, and about a dozen more of the same nature:

"A boy spent his money in oranges. Had he received five more for his money, they would have cost him ½d. each less; had he received three less, they would have cost ½d. more. Find how many he bought and at what price."

Upon which I suggested that it might perhaps be more useful to young officers, who hoped in a few years to find themselves in responsible positions, if they were given such questions as:

"What is the docking accommodation at the Cape of Good Hope? How much coal is usually stored at Hongkong and at Singapore? and what are the defences of those stations?

"Describe roughly the line taken by the submarine cable between Aden and India. At what port in India does it land? What depths of water does it lie in? and what would be the most likely places for an enemy's cruiser, with the proper appliances, to drag it up and cut it?"

It appeared to me that such questions as these would be quite as interesting, and even more useful than hunting up that old-fashioned little boy and his oranges. So I fought tooth and nail against the system of trying

to force all our sucking Drakes and Nelsons through a rigid mathematical mould, without any regard to the tendency of their latent talents. But it was not until some years after I had left Greenwich, until much time had been wasted over the little boy and his oranges, and until not a few healthy young scamps (temporary scamps) had been forced to transfer their talents to other spheres, that the system was altered, and that only those Sub-Lieutenants who had already arrived at a certain standard of mathematics, and who had a taste for them and were "specializing," were put through the Greenwich mill.

It was very hard on the fathers of the lads, that the sons upon whom they had spent much money, and no doubt formed sanguine hopes, should suffer the disappointment and reproach of being pronounced unfit for H.M. Service, just because they were unable to pass a mathematical examination.

I used to get pathetic letters from fathers and mothers, complaining of the expenses—necessary expenses—of Greenwich College. The fact being that the necessary expenses were by no means great; but the real rub was that some injudicious parents gave their sons a wide command of money, or, at any rate, promised to pay their bills for them. These lads set the pace, so that a large number of quite unnecessary expenses became necessary expenses through the force of example.

We all know what imitative creatures young men of nineteen and twenty are, and how they hate being left behind. We remember our own views of life at that age, and find it difficult to be too severe. And although, as Captain of the college, I was in a position to give any amount of good advice, and found no

difficulty in doing so, I must confess that, although my young friends listened to it with great patience, they were no more disposed to follow it than I had been myself at their age.

The idea of converting Greenwich Hospital into a naval college was an excellent one. I believe it originated with that able and highly respected officer, Admiral Sir Cooper Key, and he always took the greatest interest in it as long as he lived. As a home for the superannuated sailors of the Royal Navy the institution had outlived its use. The introduction of the continuous-service system into the Navy, and the granting of pensions for life to all men who had served for twenty-one years, enabled the old sailors to spend the evening of their lives in far greater comfort than they ever enjoyed in the magnificent prison known as Greenwich Hospital. The few old salts who still remained in the buildings were generously provided for elsewhere, and after some necessary internal alterations, a very thorough clean up, and an immense amount of fumigation—which I was told it wanted—the venerable pile was turned into a seat of learning and duly equipped with professors of mathematics, applied mechanics, physics, chemistry, fortification, French, German, steam, naval architecture, freehand drawing, and a few others—with a Fellow of the Royal Society as director of studies. Thus Greenwich College started on its ambitious career of providing the country with a scientific Navy.

Of course my young charges the Sub-Lieutenants were not expected to pass examinations in all the above subjects. Their studies were almost entirely confined to pure mathematics—the little boy and his oranges; and if they could only answer enough problems of this sort, they got a first-class certificate and passed with

flying colours. And, on the other hand, if they could only answer *just* enough, they scraped through with a third; and that was all that the majority of them aimed at. Their object was to have a good time, and to get to London from Saturday noon to Sunday night; which they could all do, unless they were "gated" for some breach of the regulations.

The reader must not suppose that, in writing of Greenwich College as I am now doing, I underrate in the smallest degree the immense advantage it has been, and is, to the Navy—by providing opportunities for a higher education, and especially for the study of applied mechanics by those officers who desire to make themselves masters of the very complicated and essentially scientific equipment of a modern warship. Indeed, I have little doubt that, had it not been for the ample opportunities of acquiring scientific knowledge which Greenwich has, for the last forty years, been providing for naval officers, our Navy could never have attained to its present state of efficiency, and been thus in a position to assert and maintain our maritime supremacy, which many of us believe will prove, as of yore, to be the governing factor in the great war.

My quarters at Greenwich looked out upon the river, and I found it to be a terrible place for gapeseed. The views were most fascinating, and I spent a good deal of my spare time sketching the picturesque barges, with their beautiful brown and red sails. The worst of it was that they never would stand still for one minute, except when they anchored, and then they were not nearly so picturesque.

My two years at Greenwich passed all too quickly. My two eldest children were born there; and in the autumn of 1885 I got a letter from my old friend, Lord

Clanwilliam, telling me that he was about to hoist his flag again, as Commander-in-Chief on the North American and West Indian Station, and asking me to go with him once more, as his Flag-Captain.

I was delighted to hear that he was well enough to go to sea again, and, of course, accepted immediately.

CHAPTER XI

THE OLD "BELLEROPHON"—NORTH AMERICA

The ship designated for my chief's flagship was the old *Bellerophon*. But, as she was not nearly ready, he went out by mail-steamer, and relieved his predecessor (Sir J. E. Commerell), hoisting his flag temporarily in the *Northampton*, leaving me to bring out the *Bellerophon* when ready. So off I went to Devonport, to take up my new job of fitting out; looking forward with much interest to visiting some of my old haunts, on a station where I had previously spent seven years—1861-1868—in the *Ariadne* and *Cordelia*.

The *Bellerophon* had been a good ship in her day; but she was twenty years old and quite out of date as a fighting ship. They tried to rejuvenate her by re-arming her with short eight-inch breech-loading guns in her battery, instead of the old twelve-ton muzzle-loaders; but it was not a success. She was like an overloaded camel. Each succeeding commission had seen some new weights put on board of her, and nothing ever taken out. So, when we were finally ready for sea, we found that she was two feet deeper than her designed draught, and looked for all the world like a half-tide rock.

I pointed out to the Admiralty that in her overloaded condition the ship would scarcely be seaworthy, and that she would not be able to open her battery ports

and fight her guns, except in a calm; and the sequel proved that I was right.

About this time (1885) there was a perfect craze for naval economy. It was not confined to the Radical politicians. The Conservatives were very nearly as bad. Both parties wanted votes, and the only way to get popularity and votes was to reduce expenditure on the Navy and Army. As we were never going to have another war, it was obviously a waste of money to spend it on new ships of war. Money was wanted for social reform—*i.e.*, bribery for votes. Naval economy therefore took the form of patching up old and obsolete ships. Some were re-armed, some were re-engined and some were unrigged; but the money spent upon these alterations would have been better expended on new ships. There was, however, a *very strong* argument against building new ships: They would themselves very soon become obsolete. Therefore it was better to wait until naval architects had arrived at some finality in their designs for fighting ships.

Finality in naval architecture!

And yet the people who used this argument were walking about, loose, outside the walls of a lunatic asylum.

Another argument of the economists took the form of declaring that, if we built new ships, we should annoy and irritate our neighbours, and cause them to build new ships also; and as all international disputes were, in future, to be settled by arbitration, we should only be wasting our money.

The people who used this argument were also walking about, loose, outside the walls of a lunatic asylum.

The term "seaworthy" is, of course, comparative. Plenty of unseaworthy ships put to sea and reach port

in safety; whereas some ships considered in every respect seaworthy are lost. It depends a good deal upon what sort of weather they meet and how they are handled.

When we finally put to sea in the *Bellerophon*, I considered that she was on the border-line of the term "seaworthy," and I so reported to the Port Admiral; but I was told to go, and I went.

One of my chief anxieties was connected with the new guns. There was no proper way of securing them; nothing but the compressor and a small iron tripping-toggle which might easily become displaced; when the compressor would probably work loose and the gun would run out and burst the port open. But when I reported officially, and as strongly as due respect and discipline permitted, that I considered this arrangement entirely unsatisfactory and dangerous, I was gravely informed that the gunnery department at the Admiralty was of opinion that the *vis inertiæ* of the guns would keep them quite steady and prevent them from moving. To which I replied that I had generally found guns at sea developed a good deal more *vis* than *inertia*, especially in a gale of wind. But the Admiralty would do nothing; so I went to the Dockyard Admiral—who entirely agreed with my views—and got him to supply us with some rough timber, which we sawed up into shores, and the day before going to sea we shored up all the guns as snug as possible. It would no doubt have taken an hour or two to clear for action; but, then, we were at peace with all the world, and all future disputes between nations were going to be settled by arbitration.

The day after leaving Plymouth Sound we got into a nor'-west gale, and, as we were bound first to Madeira, the sea was on the beam, and the old, overloaded ship

wallowed in the trough of the sea and rolled very deeply. The wind and sea increased, and we began to dip our quarter boats into the water. The guns were all right, but, as I did not want to lose our boats, I rounded to, so as to bring the sea more on the bow, and lay to under easy steam and fore-and-aft sails, until the wind and sea abated, and then made sail for Madeira.

I have very little doubt, if I had trusted to the *vis inertiæ* theory of the gunnery pundits at the Admiralty, and failed to shore up the guns, that some of them would have fetched way, burst the ports, and the ship would have sunk.

I met my Admiral in the *Northampton* at one of the Windward Islands, and he transferred his flag to the *Bellerophon*, sending the *Northampton* home. We picked up some of our squadron of small corvettes, and then started to make a round of the southern division of our station, before going north to Bermuda and Halifax for the spring and summer—this being the immemorial routine for the flagship on the North American and West Indian Station.

I was looking forward with great delight to revisiting Jamaica, I had such pleasant recollections of many rides amongst the beautiful mountain scenery of that lovely island, and I promised to pilot my Admiral and show him the best of it; for I knew it all, from Morant Bay to Savanna la Mar. But, alas! I was never again to set foot upon its hospitable shores; for when we arrived with the squadron off Port Royal, we were met outside by a guard-boat, from which we learnt, to our great disappointment, that there had been several cases of yellow fever at Kingston. If we were to go inside the harbour, we should be quarantined in

every other island. So we went on our way—but not rejoicing.

My dear old chief was still very sweet on sailing (there is no other word for it), even in the old *Bellerophon*. So we not only made most of our passages under sail, but, when opportunity offered, the squadron used to "try rate of sailing" to windward. My brother-sailors will know what this means, even if they have never tried it in an old, overloaded ironclad; and the landcrabs—if any of them are weak enough to read these "Memories"—must try and make a guess. It was a relic of the past, and it was one of the most interesting and exciting events of the old sailing days, when there was no other way of getting to windward. All races are exciting, even between cripples; and some people go from London to Brighton by coach—or they did before the war. They get more fresh air, and so did we in the *Bellerophon* when we sailed.

When steam was first introduced into the Navy, in the early part of last century, we are told that the Admiralty of the day fought tooth and nail against it, declaring that it would spell ruin for England. If some of these fine old seamen could rise from their graves now, and see our thirty-knot light cruisers steaming against a fresh breeze, our *Lion* and *Tiger* in action, our submarines, and our flying squadrons (though not the flying squadrons of their days), how surprised the old boys would be, and how gladly they would admit that their methods were capable of improvement!

Bermuda and Halifax had always divided between them the honour of being considered the headquarters of the N.A. and W.I. Station. Bermuda in the spring and autumn, and Halifax in the summer, with a cruise

round the West Indian islands in the winter. Such had been the routine for the Commander-in-Chief for many years past, and such it still was in 1886. But it is all altered now, and Halifax has been made over to Canada.

The early spring found the *Bellerophon* at Bermuda, where there is a good Admiralty House, as there is also—or, rather, was—at Halifax; and as it was intended to make a good long stay at Bermuda, the Admiral's wife came out from England, and the Captain's did the same. And as the latter was delayed at New York for three or four days, waiting for the Bermuda steamer, she took a trip to Niagara on her own hook. A very sensible and sporting thing to do.

I knew Bermuda well, some years before, as a Lieutenant in the *Ariadne* and *Cordelia;* but I never fell in love with it, as I did with Jamaica: I always thought its charms greatly overrated. There is nothing that can be called scenery, though some of the little bays and islets, washed by emerald-green waters, might be called "pretty"; but all the islands are low (there are supposed to be 365 of them, counting rocks), and the eternal cedar-trees become monotonous.

Nevertheless we spent a pleasant two months at Bermuda, and then dispersed our squadron of small cruisers and went on to the northern ports—Halifax, Quebec, St. John (New Brunswick), St. John's (Newfoundland), Gaspé, etc. This was all well-known ground to me, some twenty years earlier; but I found many of the places greatly changed and very few of my old friends left. New countries change rapidly; but the greatest change of all was in St. John, New Brunswick. The town was absolutely unrecognizable to me. I had spent the whole of the summer of 1866 there in

the *Cordelia*, and at that time nearly all the houses were built of wood, as in nearly all the earlier Canadian towns—until they were burnt down.

I don't remember the exact date of the fire which wiped out the old St. John; but I think it was in the seventies. At any rate, the date is of no consequence to my story, as it was, practically speaking, wiped out and rebuilt in stone, between 1866 and 1886.

I found one of my old friends there at the latter date, who had been through the fiery ordeal, and he gave me a graphic and blood-curdling account of the scenes which took place during the conflagration. The fire seems to have spread with extraordinary rapidity; fanned by a high wind, it leaped from house to house and from street to street, devouring everything before it, and licking up the wooden houses as if they had been so many heaps of pine shavings. My friend and his wife (both of them rather more than elderly) had to run for their lives, leaving in their house the body of their son-in-law, who had died the day before, and who was thus gratuitously cremated.

While my old friend was relating his harrowing story, he frequently interrupted himself with the remark, "I assure you, my dear Fitzgerald, it was hell upon earth." And I took his word for it.

The new stone town is, of course, a great improvement on the old wooden one; but it was strange to me. It failed to recall to my mind any visions of the happy days I had spent there in 1866; and altogether the visit, for me, was rather sad and disappointing. I was twenty years older, and perhaps that had something to do with it.

Halifax was also a good deal changed, though not so much as St. John. The lakes around still held good

trout; but one had to drive some distance to get to those which were not over-fished, and the mosquito and the little black fly are very attentive—as they are all over Canada—and greatly dilute the pleasure of fishing. But I found it a good plan to take a couple of young midshipmen with me, to act as bait, when I went fishing; not bait for the fish, but for the mosquitoes, who greatly preferred their pink and tender skins to my weather-beaten hide—especially as the boys would insist, in spite of all advice, in taking off their coats and rolling up their shirt-sleeves, thus actually providing for the enemy a wider area for operations. Nevertheless I did not escape altogether; for some of the bloodthirsty brutes were that ravenous that I verily believe they would have bitten through Pat Hagerty's old leather breeches.

Muskadobbit (phonetic spelling), about twenty miles to the eastward of Halifax, was said to be a famous place for white trout fishing; so the Captain of the *Dido*—my old friend Vandermeulen—and I got a week's leave and went off there to try our luck. The worst of it was that the fishing was nine miles from the nearest inn, and we had to row down that nine miles each morning to the mouth of the river, and then there was only about two hours' fishing in the whole day. It was a very curious sort of fly-fishing, for we actually fished in the salt water, and the fish only rose during about the first two hours of the flood-tide; but the sport was fast and furious while it lasted. One rod fished from the boat, while the other landed on a small low sand spit and fished from there. We fished with very large coarse flies, which a well-educated English or Irish white trout would not have looked at; but these unsophisticated fish took eagerly, not infrequently

two at a time, and they were beauties, three and four pounders, fresh run, and as bright as a new silver teapot. No skill required and no mosquitoes!

The tide in this part of the world is very remarkable. Everyone who has ever looked at a map of North America knows the shape of the peninsula of Nova Scotia, separated as it is from the mainland for the greater part of its length by a deep bay, the Bay of Fundy. Well, on the Halifax side of the peninsula there is a rise and fall of tide of only eight feet; while at the head of the Bay of Fundy there is a rise and fall of sixty feet, the greatest tide in the world. The water seems to get bottled up in some way, and the flood-tide is preceded by a huge tidal wave, known as a "bore"; very dangerous for small craft, and rendering all navigation difficult, more especially as the Bay of Fundy is one of the worst places in the world for fogs.

St. John's, Newfoundland, was, as usual, reeking of salt-fish, the staple industry of the town. One soon gets accustomed to it; but on entering the harbour, if the wind happens to be offshore, the smell is appalling. The people are not rich, but, like all Canadians, they are extremely hospitable, and are very proud of being England's oldest colony. It is not an interesting place, even after you have got over the smell of the fish.

What shall I say of Quebec? The Spaniards have a proverb: "Qui no ha vista Sevilla no ha vista marvilla."

May we not say the same of Quebec? Was not the capture of Quebec by Wolfe and his handful of British soldiers a marvel—one of the wonders of the world? But it is scarcely possible to realize the magnitude of the difficulties which had to be surmounted, or adequately to appreciate the audacity and genius of the

General who stormed the Heights of Abraham by night, without seeing the place with one's own eyes. It was one of those dramatic incidents of war which fix our attention and claim our admiration in a special and peculiar degree; not only on account of the military glory of the feat, but still more from its ultimate influence on the history of North America; for it gave the momentous decision as to a French or British Canada.

There were some people who thought it was weak of Great Britain to allow the French settlers complete freedom to maintain their language, their religion, and all their national institutions, undisturbed, in the very heart of a British colony still in its infancy. And it must not be forgotten that there was far more intolerance about religion a century and a half ago than there is to-day. But the sequel has shown that our enlightened policy—enlightened in advance of the age—was right. For it is impossible to believe that any less liberal and generous policy would have produced that spirit of loyalty to the Empire which has shone forth so brilliantly amongst the French Canadians during the present war. Moreover, those who know Canada well tell us that this loyalty would be equally conspicuous and equally sincere, even if France had not been fighting as our Ally.

The old *Bellerophon* had a narrow escape from leaving her bones on the shores of the estuary of the great St. Lawrence. We were deceived by the Barber. The Barber is a low fog, not more than three or four feet high, which rests on the surface of the sea during certain conditions of atmosphere, and it is apt to be most deceptive as to distances. I ought to have known better than to be taken in by the Barber, as I had navigated

in Canadian waters on several previous occasions; but the rascal assumed his most deceptive guise, and thoroughly took me in. We were steaming along on the southern side of the great estuary, making for Father Point, to pick up a pilot to take us to Quebec. It was a flat calm, not a ripple on the water, and the Barber was spread upon the sea like a table-cloth. We had fixed our position by cross-bearings of lights during the night, and were shaping a course to take us up the estuary about two miles from its southern shore, in a depth of ten or twelve fathoms. As the day broke, we saw the shore, the trees, some houses, and the beach—or, rather, what we thought was the beach. In fact, the navigator and I would have been prepared to swear it was the beach. For must not a man believe his own eyes? But, alas! that rascally conjurer the Barber had spread his table-cloth not only over the water, but over the land, and covered up the low shore, for a mile or so inland, as we found out *afterwards*. However, we had leadsmen in both chains, heaving away gaily, and they were not getting soundings; so we went on with confidence. Then presently there was a low rumbling sound, which apparently came from the engine-room; we asked them down the voice-tube if there was anything the matter, and if they wanted to stop the engines. "Nothing the matter here, sir." But the rumbling went on; and as our leadsmen said they were getting no bottom with fifteen fathoms of line, we were sorely puzzled. An earthquake seemed to be about the only solution, only they don't have earthquakes in Canada.

The rumbling got worse, so I stopped the engines and put the helm hard-a-port.

"Now, Quartermaster, go into the chains, get an

up-and-down cast of the lead, and see what depth of water we really *are* in."

"Four and a half fathoms, sir!"

Put not your trust in leadsmen. We had been scraping along on a wonderfully level sandy bottom for about a quarter of an hour, and there was rocky bottom a few hundred yards ahead of us, when we stopped and turned off. There was no damage done, but it was an uncommonly close shave, and I felt very crestfallen when I called the Admiral and told him I had been deceived by the Barber and nearly wrecked his flagship. He, too, had been wondering what was the matter in the engine-room.

About the only change I found in Quebec since my former visits was the absence of British troops. Canada had come of age. The grand old fortress was garrisoned with Canadian militia, and the British Army had lost one of its most popular stations.

On one of my former visits, during the sixties, I had met one of the battalions of the Rifle Brigade; and as it was the month of November, and as the snow was very nearly—though not quite—in order for sleighing, these sporting soldiers took me for some exhilarating sleigh-drives, with tandems. I remember it seemed to me that they were carrying rather too much sail; but they assured me that when they did capsize they generally managed to find a soft place.

On our way back from Quebec we stopped at Gaspé, where the Admiral had been given a few days' salmon-fishing for two rods; but as he was not well enough to go fishing himself, he turned it over to the parson and me. Todd, the parson, was a keen and experienced fisherman, and under his guidance I caught my first salmon.

We had a most enjoyable trip up the Gaspé River to the fishing-station, where we found a comfortable wooden bungalow, fitted up with beds, armchairs, plates and dishes, cooking utensils, and all the luxuries one could wish for, and far more than we expected.

The banks of the river were thickly wooded, right down to the water's edge; so we had to fish from canoes, which is never quite such good sport—to my mind—as bank-fishing, but that was impossible.

We greatly admired the skill of our boatmen in poling our birch-bark canoes up against the stream of the rushing river, which seemed to be all rapids, except just at the salmon pools, which were few and far between; but they generally held a salmon. In some places the river must have been running eight or nine miles an hour, so that paddling was out of the question, and the only way of getting up against the stream was by poling with long, light poles, close in to one of the banks, amongst the branches of the trees, which overhung the river and got very much in our way. Not only great skill but great strength was required, to get the canoe up against such a rapid stream. Sometimes one of the poles would slip on the stony bottom, and then, in one second, the canoe would be whisked round broadside on and carried downstream twenty or thirty yards, before the man could get a fresh grip of the bottom and check her. It was warm work and quite exciting in some places, as there were rocks just awash, which would have crumpled us up like matchwood if we had hit them.

The river was alive with white trout; but we voted them a nuisance, as we were after salmon and the trout spoilt our sport. The water was as clear as crystal, and on several occasions I could see a salmon rising to

my fly, when an impudent little white trout would make a dash at it, get himself hooked, and kick up such a bobbery that he disturbed the whole pool. It was very tantalizing. However, we got a few salmon and a great many white trout, and had a most enjoyable holiday.

When Lord Clanwilliam took up the appointment of Commander-in-Chief of the N.A. and W.I. Station, he was so near the top of the Vice-Admirals' list that he knew his command would be a short one, and that he could not possibly hope to hold it for the usual three years. In fact, it soon became apparent, from the vacancies on the full-Admirals' list, that he would only be able to hold it for a little more than one year, and this eventually proved to be the case. He was promoted to the rank of full-Admiral, and as the station was a Vice-Admirals' command, he had to give it up, and was relieved by Vice-Admiral Sir Algernon Lyons.

Lord Clanwilliam and all his staff came home to England by mail-steamer, and I went on shore on half-pay; but as I had been almost continuously employed on full-pay ever since my promotion (a very unusual piece of luck), I certainly had nothing to grumble about, and was not at all sorry to look forward to a little spell on shore with my family, to enjoy "the blessings of the land, with the fruits of my labours." Nevertheless, my joy at the prospect of being out of harness for a year or two was somewhat damped by the thought that I had, in all probability, terminated my service connection with my dear old chief, with whom I had served in four ships, and to whom I had become deeply attached. His was one of those rare characters, so unlike those of the men we meet in the ordinary course

of rubbing through the world, that it is safe to predict they will be misunderstood by many of those with whom they come in contact; and it used to annoy me greatly to see how frequently he *was* misunderstood. Not at all from any ambiguity in what he said or did, but—paradoxical as it may appear—for exactly the opposite reason; for there never was the slightest ambiguity about what he said or did; quite the other way. He spoke very plainly—perhaps too plainly for some tastes—and never minced his words, especially when he thought someone was trying to blarney him and talk him into believing something which he did not believe. Then his righteous wrath and indignation were very plainly expressed, to the mortification of the misguided individual who had been "trying it on"—with the wrong man.

I remember being much amused on one occasion, when he was Captain of the steam reserve at Portsmouth and I was Commander of the *Asia*. An order came from the Admiralty directing him to inspect and report upon a new invention for boat-lowering. The gifted inventor was allowed to fit up his apparatus on board one of the hulks in Portsmouth Harbour, and when all was ready, the Captain of the steam reserve came to inspect it. The inventor was quite an orator, and volubly pointed out to us the surpassing merits of his invention, and assured us that it was immensely superior to any other boat-lowering gear that had ever been used or thought of. When he had been talking for about ten minutes, it became obvious that he was very anxious that one of us should make some remark or ask some question, so as to give him a fresh start; but my chief said not a word, and I took my cue from him and remained silent, though I saw glaring defects in the gear

and also in the arguments which were used in recommending it.

At last, when it became evident to the inventor that no one was going to make any remark or ask any questions, he stopped talking; and then Lord Clanwilliam remarked, very quietly, "Ah, I have heard all that sort of thing before, from people who have never been to sea."

The poor man collapsed, and I felt rather sorry for him, as I had been in the inventing business myself, in a small way, and I knew the enthusiasm of it, and how inordinately fond one gets to be of one's own chickens, or, rather, of the eggs, even when they are addled and don't hatch out.

Lord Clanwilliam had for many years been associated with, and taken much useful interest in, Eltham School, and after his death a handsome memorial was put up to him in the school buildings. It was unveiled by Lord George Hamilton, who had been First Lord of the Admiralty when Lord Clanwilliam had been Junior Sea Lord. Lord George thus addressed the boys:

"I have come here with great pleasure. One reason is that the school is associated with one of the most distinguished Admirals. I mean the Earl of Clanwilliam, with whom I served when at the Admiralty. I assure you boys he was the beau-ideal of what a sailor should be. I knew him all my life, and feel so pleased to know that a beautiful memorial has been put up to him in these buildings. He was wounded early in life, and that wound gave him constant pain, which he bore heroically. You boys should think of him as your pattern through life; for, believe me, his constant thought was honour and furtherance of duty."

This is all quite true. He was a gallant and chivalrous gentleman. No one who had ever served with him

could fail to recognize and to admire his transparent honesty and whole-hearted devotion to duty. He never allowed his private feelings or personal interests to stand for one moment between him and what he conceived to be his duty, and he was quite unable to understand how any of his brother officers could do so, no matter what their rank might be, nor what specious reasons they might advance for trying to do so; his condemnation of such conduct was emphatic and expressed in no measured terms. Anything in the shape of shuffling or prevarication was equally obnoxious to him. It may perhaps be said that this is a mere platitude, and that shuffling and prevarication are obnoxious to every honest man. True—in theory; yet I am afraid I am enough of a cynic to look upon the word honesty as a comparative term. How can it be otherwise when we see our leading men, our lawyer-statesmen, making a statement one day and then finding it necessary to make an elaborate explanation of it next day, in order that honest men may understand —or try to understand—what it means.

In connection with what I have called the transparent honesty of my dear old chief, there often comes to my mind some lines in that grand old sea-song "Tom Bowling":

> "Tom never from his word departed,
> His virtues were so rare;
> His friends were many and true-hearted,
> His Poll was kind and fair."

What irony is contained in those first two lines!

CHAPTER XII

ON SHORE—NAVAL DEFENCE ACT, 1889

When I came on shore from the *Bellerophon* in the autumn of 1886, I had been almost continuously on full-pay since my promotion to the rank of Captain in 1880—a very unusual piece of good luck, as Captains' appointments were going at that time; but as I could not reasonably look forward to a continuance of this luck, I made up my mind to be prepared for at least a couple of years of half-pay, as it was only fair that other Captains should have a chance, and that my remarkable good luck should be balanced by a spell amongst the unemployed, which I got. But being of a restless disposition and failing to appreciate the charms of idleness, I looked around for some object which might be at least innocent and perhaps worthy of my attention, lest Satan should "find some mischief still for idle hands to do;" and it was not long before I joined a gang of conspirators known as the "panic-mongers and chronic alarmists," who were trying to awaken their countrymen to the fact that for some years past our Navy had been allowed to fall into a state of weakness (comparative, of course) and unpreparedness for war, which threatened the very existence of Great Britain as an independent Power—to say nothing of her scattered Empire. And when I found amongst the conspirators such men as Admiral of the Fleet Sir Thomas Symonds, Sir Geoffrey Hornby, Captain Lord Charles Beresford, R.N., M.P.,

and a few other distinguished seamen who had read and studied the naval history of their country, I joined the gang and set to work, feeling, at any rate, that Satan would be checkmated for the present.

When I look back at the extraordinary mixture of apathy and ignorance which allowed our Navy to lapse into the state of weakness which it exhibited to the whole world for ten or fifteen years prior to the Naval Defence Act of 1889, I cannot help feeling the deepest gratitude to the Ruler of the Universe that war did not catch us and punish us, as we richly deserved, during those years of criminal folly. Nor can I feel the least regret for the part that I took in the agitation which led to that famous Act; notwithstanding that the Admiralty of the day thought proper to punish me for daring to criticize their supineness and to point out the lameness of their excuses for failing to ask for money enough to put the Navy on a proper footing and provide for national safety.

It is no idle fancy of mine when I say that I was punished for the part I took in the agitation which led to the Naval Defence Act; for I have it before me now, while I write, in black and white, in the handwriting of the First Lord of the Admiralty of the day, admitting that I was kept unemployed on half-pay longer than I should have been if I had not taken part in the agitation.

I may not have been cautious or discreet in what I said, or wrote to the Press on the subject. I never was cautious, and perhaps not always discreet; yet I am absolutely unrepentant, and would act in the same way again under similar circumstances. Nay more, I am not only unrepentant, but glad and proud that I was able to take ever so humble a part in awakening the country

to a sense of the pressing danger it was running by allowing the Navy to fall far below the margin of safety.

The old story about one man looking over a gate and another stealing a horse was well illustrated in the case of this agitation. For Lord Charles Beresford took a very active part in it, was far more critical of the Admiralty, and used much stronger language than ever I did, both on the platform and in the Press; but he was not punished. He had considerable political influence, and the Admiralty were afraid of him. I had no political influence, and they were not afraid of me; so I became a useful scapegoat.

The reader will perhaps remember that the Naval Defence Act of 1889 provided for the building of seventy ships at a cost of £21,000,000. Nine of these were to be battleships, of a power, speed, and general equipment hitherto unattempted by this or any other country. The type was copied by most of the great maritime Powers, including Japan, and remained, with slight modifications, the accepted type of the ideal battleship, down to the advent of the Dreadnought era, at the beginning of the present century, when the all-big-gun type took its place. And this latter type, as all the world knows, was also copied by all the Great Powers, without exception.

The designs for the whole of the seventy ships, including battleships, first and second class cruisers, and small craft, were the product of the genius of that bold and skilful naval architect the late Sir William White, whom I had the honour of counting amongst my personal friends. And although I had taken the liberty of criticizing adversely some of his earlier designs, I feel bound to submit my opinion as a sailor, that all the seventy ships of the Naval Defence Act were, in

their various classes, a magnificent success—a success, not only from a seaman's point of view, but from a national point of view. For when the Boer War broke out ten years later, it was these very ships which alone stood between us and the hostile interference of some of our jealous rivals, with consequences which can only be guessed at. The Naval Defence Act had borne its fruit, and it was a case of "Hands off, Wilhelm!"

The "chronic alarmists" and "panic-mongers" who worked hard to awaken the country in 1887-88-89 will not be likely to forget the extraordinary opposition they encountered, not only from the perennial idiots who go about the world wagging their heads, telling people that there is never going to be any more war upon earth, as it does not pay commercially, and that therefore all money spent on armaments is wasted. Not only did we have these childish dreamers arrayed against us—as of course we expected—but we also had plenty of people who were old enough to know better—men calling themselves statesmen, and even the Board of Admiralty itself, which fought against any large increase in the Navy, to the last ditch, and only gave in when forced to do so by an awakened public opinion.

I propose to give a few choice specimens of the wit and wisdom that was arrayed against us by various people who opposed any increase in the strength of the Navy, and I think the reader will find some of the arguments rather amusing.

The Peace Society was, of course, early in the field—very angry, very violent, militant, insulting, and abusive, as becomes lovers of peace.

"It is a very simple, though a somewhat painful proceeding, for gullible John Bull to empty his purse

in obedience to panic-mongering Admirals, an impressible Cabinet, and an interested journalism, with the idea of obtaining more ships for adequate naval defence. But it is one of the least likely things in the world that the desired ships and security will result. . . . Hence we have already more Admirals than line-of-battle ships. And still the cry from the Admirals, and their interested friends, is for more officers and more ships."

The comparison between the number of Admirals and line-of-battle ships is truly delightful, and shows a profound knowledge of the subject of national defence.

The gentle dove of peace then proceeds to coo some amiable charges of malversation against the Government:

"The taxes have been diverted wholesale into all manner of waste, extravagance, and incompetence. The only certainty has been that more profitable contracts would be secured by favoured parties, etc. . . . What have you done with the scores and hundreds of millions sterling already voted within the last ten or twelve years? . . . In short, incalculable sums voted for ships and defence have been spent in almost everything but ships and defence. And of the ships built with the remnant of the money, how many have proved failures, or have had to be broken up, or resold at ruinous sacrifices? . . . And, further, the introduction of dynamite as an element in naval warfare is likely to render the destruction of the largest warships a very easy matter. . . . It is a matter of notoriety in many localities that amounts put down by certain tradesmen in the bills of unsuspecting heads of families, as for 'groceries' or for 'goods,' have really been for wine and spirits surreptitiously supplied to tippling wives or servants in the household. So in national administra-

tion it is one of the easiest of courses first to raise a panic, then to obtain further millions from the frightened taxpayer for 'ships' and 'national defences,' and lastly to actually appropriate these grants in those winding ways and dark abysses where the millions before have disappeared."

Blessed are the peacemakers! They are always so courteous, so gentle, so well-informed, so thoroughly patriotic, and so worthy of the great Empire in which they have inherited a share.

A copy of the above manifesto—from which I have only culled a few of the flowers of rhetoric—was sent to Mr. Gladstone by the secretary of the Peace Society, who received the following reply:

"DEAR SIR,—

"In the objects and tone of the memorial you have sent me I find much which commands my sympathy.

"My age and my present engagements greatly narrow my power of attention to many of the public questions which so well deserve attention. But it is certainly not from me, nor is it, I believe, from the leading men of the Liberal party, that you will have to apprehend any leaning to excess in connection with the military or even the naval establishments of the country.

"I remain your very faithful servant,

"W. E. GLADSTONE."

It is remarkable that even Mr. Gladstone should be in sympathy with the "tone" of the memorial. Yet it is a typical Gladstonian letter, worthy of the man who deserted Gordon, induced his leader to make a present of Corfu to the Greeks, and finally betrayed his country for the price of eighty Irish votes.

"Great Britain is very tough; she has already survived a Charles James Fox, a Gladstone, a Campbell-Bannerman, a Lord John Russell, a William Harcourt, and sundry other eloquent Radicals, who have appeared in the political firmament from time to time as shining lights of progress. Cosmopolitan patriots—if the two words are not contradictory—loving every other country better than their own; ever ready to oppose all wise preparations for national defence either by land or sea; with an eye to appropriating as much as possible of the national revenue for bribing the most ignorant class of voters with various sops, in order to keep the "party of progress" in power; until it blindly runs up against a great catastrophe. And then—"Who'd 'a thought it?"

Well, one man at any rate thought it—and thought it and said it for several years, in plenty of time to prepare for it; but political lawyers, masquerading as statesmen, convinced themselves (and unfortunately the country too) that they knew far better how to prepare for war than a great soldier, whose wise and timely warnings they treated with a contempt born of ignorant vanity, thus offering a temptation to a great military Power which was not to be neglected.

But I am getting far ahead of my story, and must hark back again to the late eighties, where we find the same malign influences at work as were opposed to Lord Roberts at a later date.

I have already remarked that there were others as well as the Peace Society—men who were old enough to know better—who opposed the Naval Defence Bill both in and out of Parliament.

Thus, Sir William Harcourt, in a public speech at Bromley, told his audience that the Bill was

" the result of a panic—what he would venture to call a manufactured scare. (Laughter.) He confessed it was a scare which had never alarmed him at all. The Government themselves did not believe in it. He had seen in his time a good many of these panics. It was a disorder with which he was perfectly well acquainted. He knew the symptoms of its coming on (laughter); he knew exactly how long it would last; he knew exactly the state in which people were when they were suffering under it (renewed laughter); he knew they would recover and that they would be very well for a good long time and then they would have another fit. (Laughter.) . . . England was a rich country, and fortunately could afford it, and he should not so much mind it if he thought that the panic-mongers would be satisfied when they had got what they asked for. But then they never were satisfied. Panic-mongers were in that respect very much like ladies of fashion. They were never satisfied with the outfit they had got; and when they had procured a large number of very expensive dresses, they always said they had got nothing to wear (great laughter)."

And so on, and so on, for half an hour or more, to the same effect. Very witty no doubt. But the cream of the wit lay in the fact that Sir William Harcourt had, only four years earlier, been himself the victim of one of the worst naval panics with which the country has ever been visited. He had been a leading member of Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1884, when the so-called Penjdeh incident so thoroughly alarmed them all, that they sent their emissaries scuttling about the country to buy up inappropriate and decrepit ships of all sorts and sizes, at any price; because there seemed to be a probability of war with a third-class naval Power! (Loud laughter—by Father Neptune this time.)

I must give another specimen of the sort of argument which was used against the Naval Defence Bill during

the debate in the House of Commons. And though not by a very important person, it is typical of certain views on national defence which are from time to time set forth by some of those representatives of the people who are sent to Westminster to make laws for the prosperity and safety of the British Empire.

"Mr. Picton, M.P., asked: What Power wished to attack our interests? Were Englishmen living among a world of Pirates, and was Europe nothing but a den of thieves? . . . He had more confidence in human nature. . . . If, however, we believed in the moral supremacy of this country, we ought rather to set an example of moderate disarmament; and no doubt our example would be followed."

No doubt—no doubt whatever, as we found by experience some years later, when the party of progress started upon a policy of "dropping Dreadnoughts"—as it was called—with the view of inducing Germany to do the same; and the amiable and trustful party were quite shocked and greatly surprised to find that it had exactly the opposite effect.

We hear from time to time that our police magistrates express surprise at the frequent recurrence of the well-known confidence trick. No matter how often it is exposed, there is an inexhaustible supply of soft-headed dupes waiting to be caught, ready to drop their money; or, if they are politicians, to drop Dreadnoughts, in the hope of picking up votes.

The years 1888 and 1889 were momentous years in the history—the peace history—of the British Navy. They furnish a striking example of the crude, haphazard, unbusinesslike method in which the service responsible for the very life and independence of the nation is either kept up or allowed to fall below the

margin of safety, according as to how the political weathercock blows around its well-oiled spindle.

Lord George Hamilton was First Lord of the Admiralty during these momentous years. He was a clever, active, hardworking and thoroughly conscientious politician, as ignorant of naval matters as all other civilian First Lords; but most anxious to do his duty by the Navy, at the same time that he worked in harmony with his political colleagues. And in this connection it is only fair to remember that the First Lord of the Admiralty is always between the devil and the deep sea, the devil being represented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer (generally a land-shark by profession) and the Sea Lords, who have a constitutional antipathy to all sharks, and no great regard for politicians—as such. So it is not surprising if the Sea Lords—who know something about naval matters—and the civilian First Lord and Chancellor of the Exchequer, who don't, should sometimes be in disagreement.

That the Naval Defence Act of 1889 was mainly—if not entirely—due to the agitation got up and pressed home by the panic-mongering Admirals is, to my mind, unquestionable, and capable of demonstration.

Returning thanks for the Navy at the Royal Academy banquet on May 7th, 1888, Lord George Hamilton said:

"It has been suggested that an immediate and wholesale outlay might be advantageous to Her Majesty's Navy; but this proposition is put forward on the theory that the expenditure of one day means the efficiency of the next day. (Hear, hear.)"

Of course, no such silly theory had ever been put forth, not even by the panic-mongering Admirals.

On the contrary, the theory was put forward that if you did not begin building a ship, you could never expect to finish her; and, further, that even if you began to build her at once, you could not expect to make any use of her in less than two years.

Lord George then went on:

"Now if there is one single fact which has been brought home to the mind of every individual who has been in any way associated with the administration of Her Majesty's Navy during the past three years, it is this, that the resuscitation of a Navy under present conditions must be a slow, a gradual, and a laborious process. The mere expenditure of money can no more attain that object than a sick man can be restored to health by wholesale draughts of alcohol. (Laughter.)"

The panic-mongering Admirals were quite unable to see either the wit, the wisdom, or the relevance of the last remark. Nor could they see any reason why the process of resuscitating the Navy should be slow, seeing that not even the most skilful politician could fix the date at which the ships would be urgently wanted. So we went on with our agitation, unabashed by the First Lord's alcohol and unconvinced by his logic.

The most remarkable feature of the agitation which led to the Naval Defence Act was the fact that it was opposed by a sailor; and no less important a sailor than the First Sea Lord of the Admiralty.

I have seen a good many agitations during my lifetime, for the purpose of calling the attention of the country to the state into which the politicians, for party reasons, had allowed the Navy to lapse. It is our peculiar method of providing for the sufficiency of that service upon which the life and independence

of the nation mainly depends. Not a very logical or businesslike method perhaps; but as it has always been effective, when properly worked, we may banish logic to Jupiter and Saturn.

So far as my memory serves me, I cannot call to mind any other occasion upon which a sailor of any standing or position opposed a proposal for strengthening the Navy. There have been resignations of Sea Lords, and threats of resignation, if the Navy was *not* strengthened; but I never remember a Sea Lord—let alone the First Sea Lord—placing himself on the side of the so-called economists. This distinction was reserved for Sir Arthur Hood, who, it must be remembered, was Lord George Hamilton's principal naval adviser. Sir Arthur stated publicly in 1888 that he was satisfied with the strength of the Navy, so far as battleships were concerned; he did not think it necessary to build any more in the immediate future, but he would like to see six more cruisers, though he would not go so far as to say they were necessary.

Six months after making this statement Sir Arthur put his name to the Naval Defence Bill, which, as I have before mentioned, provided for the immediate building of seventy ships, at a cost of £21,000,000, nine of the said ships being battleships!

Nothing particular in our foreign relations had happened in the meantime. Nothing at all, except that the agitation of the panic-mongers had been vigorously prosecuted, and the popularity cat had jumped from the bag, and showed the direction she intended to take.

The course adopted by Sir Arthur Hood was so very extraordinary, so totally different from anything that had ever happened before, in the case of a naval Lord

of the Admiralty, that the Conservative Government of the day rewarded him with a peerage.

Not very long afterwards, when Lord Hood had taken his seat in the House of Lords, Lord Sudeley twitted him with having opposed the Naval Defence Bill, when he indignantly interposed with, "Why, I drew up and signed the Bill myself!" Which was quite true, though he was counting somewhat too confidently on the shortness of memory of the noble Lords and of the country.

The Naval Defence Bill was passed by the House of Commons with a majority of 141. The Lords, of course, passed it; and it became an Act of Parliament, the ripened fruit of which saved the British Empire, ten years later, in as great a crisis of its career as any through which it had passed for nearly a century.

In the above brief sketch of the agitation which led directly to the immediate strengthening of the Navy by seventy ships, I have not disclosed half, nor a quarter of the dodges and manœuvres of the politicians who sought to frustrate the efforts of those who thought more of national safety than of party politics. Nor have I said anything of the remarkable volte-face of the said politicians, nor of the dexterous manner in which they tried to save face, when they found it would be more popular and win more votes to succumb to the agitation than to oppose it. They performed some quite smart acrobatic feats, and then chortled over their own cleverness; but we got the ships, and that was all we cared about.

And now, after this little flutter on shore, I must ask the reader to go to sea with me once more.

CHAPTER XIII

NAVAL MANŒUVRES, 1889—A ROYAL RESCUE

In the autumn of 1889 I was appointed to take command of the *Inflexible*, temporarily commissioned for the naval manœuvres.

These autumnal naval manœuvres had for some years past been systematically carried out, with varying programmes of hypothetical warfare. They were extremely interesting, not only to the officers who were actually engaged in them, but also as a means of elucidating several obscure problems in naval warfare: such as the possibility or otherwise of blockade, under modern conditions; the endurance of officers and men, and also the endurance of the ships themselves, and specially of their engines and boilers, under circumstances which were made to represent—so far as possible—a state of hostility between two opposed squadrons, each of which was given a certain definite strategic problem to solve, the tactics, of course, being left to the Admirals in command.

All sham battles, either by land or sea, must necessarily be but a pale, and sometimes a misleading, image of actual war. But as long as this is well borne in mind, and people do not jump to hasty conclusions, naval manœuvres are extremely useful exercises, from all points of view, always bearing in mind that any conclusions which may be arrived at are strictly temporary, and are liable to be upset at any moment by some new

invention, such as wireless telegraphy, submarines, and airships. Hence the necessity for the annual repetition of the manœuvres.

The mobilization of the fleet for the 1889 manœuvres reminded me of the mobilization for the Russian War in 1854, a description of which I gave in the first volume of these records. It was not, of course, quite such a hurry-scurry, haphazard business as that, for we had made some advance in organization since that date, and there were not quite so many old fossils remaining on the so-called Active List as there were at the earlier date; but nevertheless there were not a few ancient and somewhat rusty Lieutenants, who had to be dug out of harbour ships and other sloping billets, to fill up the complements of the ships specially commissioned for the manœuvres; and it appeared to me, on commissioning the *Inflexible*, that I was given rather more than my fair share of them. Indeed, one or two of them appeared to be so rusty and so little to be trusted that I did not feel it safe to leave the deck when they had the watch at sea, either by night or day; and one of them I had to bring before a court-martial, on a charge of drunkenness, before the ship left the dockyard. He was acquitted, however; he was sharp enough to go to a young, lately joined surgeon, fresh from the hospitals and full of science, and this young medico gave his evidence at the court-martial to the effect that Lieutenant ——— was sober, basing his diagnosis on something he saw in the whites of the patient's eyes; only, of course, expressing himself in highly scientific medical language, which so impressed the Court that the prisoner was acquitted.

I had thought, up to that time, that I knew a drunken man when I saw one; but it seems I was wrong. My

H.M.S. *Inflexible* (1882).

From a water-colour drawing by the Chevalier de Martino.

medical education had been entirely neglected, and I did not even know the meaning of some of the words which were employed to prove sobriety. I must also frankly acknowledge that I was afterwards told privately, by one of the culprit's messmates, that I had court-martialled him about the only time he was sober! I felt that I should have to read some medical books.

The *Inflexible* had been a crack ship in 1882. She took part in the bombardment of Alexandria, and was at that time commanded by the present Lord Fisher. She carried four eighty-ton muzzle-loading guns in two turrets, placed *en échelon*, and her central citadel was protected with twenty-four inches of wrought-iron armour; but this only extended over about a third of her length, her ends being entirely unprotected. The smallest guns afloat could have riddled her ends and laid them open to the sea; in which case she would have promptly capsized, with her impregnable citadel intact. At least, so said Sir Edward Reed; and I believe he was right.

This was the era of the citadel ship. The exponents of the type argued that a fighting ship ought to be so constructed that it would be impossible to knock her out with one heavy blow. They therefore concentrated all the armour she was able to carry on a short thick belt amidships, protecting what they called the vitals of the ship, but leaving two-thirds of her length entirely unprotected and liable to be riddled by guns of the lightest calibre, as if this was not vital to her stability and buoyancy. The theory would have been all right if one could have been sure that the enemy would fire only at the citadel and not at the other two-thirds of the ship; but as no prospective enemy had given any such assurance, the theory was seen to be wrong, and—

largely owing to the influence of sailors—the battleships of the Naval Defence Act, and those which followed them, were given long belts.

When all the ships selected to take part in the naval manœuvres had been mobilized and assembled at Spithead, the German Emperor was graciously pleased to inspect the fleet. The Captains of all the ships were assembled on board the *Hohenzollern* to be presented to him, and they had the honour of receiving a hearty shake from the unmailed fist, before it had become stained with innocent blood, and before the blasphemous hypocrite—prince of spies and father of lies—had been found out, and his villainous character exposed.

The two fleets then put to sea, and we were given a few days to shake down and find our sea-legs, before war was declared.

I have no intention of attempting to give any general account of the various phases of the 1889 manœuvres. It would be rather technical, and I don't think it would be of much interest to the general reader, so I propose to give only a brief sketch of the part which the *Inflexible* took in them, and of an incident in which our present gracious King was the principal actor.

I cannot honestly say that I was proud of my command. She was very slow. We never succeeded in getting more than eleven knots out of her, and she steered like a beast—a stubborn mule, for instance.

It took the quartermasters and helmsmen a long time to get accustomed to her vagaries. In fact, they never got quite accustomed to them, as we spent most of our time in harbour, which was the best place for the old tub, as her lack of speed only hampered the movements of other ships.

Admiral Baird, who commanded our fleet, soon found this out; but instead of cursing *me*, as some Admirals would have done, because my ship would not go, he gave me a special job of my own—viz., the defence of Lough Swilly, in the north of Ireland, which was one of our unfortified ports that might be captured and used by the enemy.

My little squadron consisted of the *Inflexible*, *Hecla* (torpedo-depot and mine-layer), and six torpedo-boats. It was a very suitable job for the old "bogey" ship, as the *Inflexible* was called. So off we went to the north, and proceeded to make Lough Swilly impregnable. We laid several minefields—dummies, of course, with light-blowing charges, to see if they went off—landed light guns to protect the mine-fields; moored the *Inflexible* head and stern just round the corner, with her four eighty-ton guns ready to blow out of the water any enemy's ship that should dare to approach the anchorage; connected up a wire with the shore telegraphs; and then felt that we were as safe as the German fleet in the Kiel Canal.

It was necessary, however, that we should patrol the wide entrance to the Lough at night-time, in order that we might receive timely warning of the night attack which we fully expected the enemy to deliver; and in order that this patrol work might be efficiently performed, I sent out three of my six torpedo-boats each night at sunset, to patrol till daylight, when they came in and had about thirty-six hours' rest, until the night after next.

The August of 1889 was one of the stormiest I ever remember in the British Isles. It blew hard on most days, and when it was not blowing it generally rained; and on by-days, when it was not doing either, there was

a fog; so that the patrolling business was rather rough work for the little torpedo-boats. But I had nothing else to do it with, as we had no good, wholesome, sea-going destroyers in those days.

One of my torpedo-boats (No. 79) was commanded by Sub-Lieutenant Prince George of Wales, who, with one other officer, a gunner, had to run the show night and day.

One morning at daylight No. 79 came into harbour and reported that one of her consorts had broken down and was anchored on a lee-shore not far from the rocks; that she had tried to tow her off, but had carried away her only hawser, a small wire one, and then came into harbour to report, leaving the third boat to stand by the disabled one. This sounded rather bad; and as the *Inflexible* was moored off Rathmullen—round the corner, so to speak, and not in sight of the disabled boat—I decided to go out myself and undertake the rescue; but this seemed so greatly to disappoint Prince George, and he begged so hard to be allowed to "have another try," that I could not find it in my heart to refuse him; so I supplied him with a new five and a half inch hemp hawser and sent him out again, though I must confess I felt a little bit anxious, as it was blowing fresh from the north-west, and I knew quite well what sort of a sea there must be on the exposed southern shore of the wide entrance to the Lough.

The commander of No. 79 and his crew had been out all night, and a rough night too, so that they could have had no sleep; but they were all hot on the job, "for the credit of the ship," as sailors love to put it; and a little before noon No. 79 triumphantly towed her disabled consort safely into harbour.

It is not altogether plain-sailing for one torpedo-

boat to take in tow another one, anchored on a lee-shore, in a rough sea, just outside the breakers. It demands a bold initiative, considerable nerve, and skilful seamanship, such as would do credit to any officer who had enjoyed a far longer nautical experience than had fallen to the lot of our gracious King in 1889. It was, in short, a very creditable performance. But I had seen enough of Prince George to lead me to the conclusion that he was not one of those who care to play to the gallery. It was enough for him to know that he had done his duty as a seaman, and done it well. So I didn't make a fuss about it.

Of course, I reported the case to my Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Baird, telling him at the same time that I felt sure it would not be agreeable to Prince George to make any more noise about it than he would have done had the duty been performed by Sub-Lieutenant Joe Buggins. And Admiral Baird agreed with me.

It occurred to me, however, that it would be gratifying to the Prince of Wales if I wrote to him privately and told him how well his sailor son was qualifying to become an accomplished seaman. I did so, and received from His Royal Highness one of those gracious, charming letters which he knew so well how to write. In which he said:

"My wish has always been that my son should not only do the same as all other officers in the Navy, but if possible exceed any duties that may devolve upon him. It is most gratifying to me to learn that you gave him a duty to perform that was not unattended by danger, and would have reflected credit on an officer of far wider experience than he possesses."

I have often wondered, since that day, whether our gracious Sovereign would have been happier if circum-

stances had allowed him to continue his career in the service which he seemed to love so well, rather than wear a crown.

> "Deny it to a king? Then, happy low, lie down!
> Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

But Henry IV. was rather down on his luck when he said that; and we may reasonably hope that it is not always true.

Having made Lough Swilly impregnable, and having waited in vain for the enemy to attack, it occurred to me that the enemy's spies (of whom there were plenty, though we were not allowed to shoot them) had, in all probability, given full information of our defences; and that it was therefore highly improbable that any attack would be made. Under these circumstances it seemed to be a waste of fighting power to keep the *Inflexible* here any longer; but as I knew full well that neither the Admiral of the first nor of the second division of our fleet wanted my old slow-coach joined up with them, to hamper their movements, I suggested—by wire—to Admiral Baird that I should go, north about, to the East Coast of England and Scotland, and raid the enemy's towns in that district. Admiral Baird approved of my suggestion and ordered me to carry it out; so off I went, in a gale of wind, and the old tub rolled and wallowed in the trough of the sea and washed us down fore and aft, till we got to the Pentland Firth, through which we passed and then got into smooth water on the eastern side.

Early next morning I bombarded Wick, which was supposed to be a fortified town; and then, about noon, we sighted the masts of two battleships, their hulls being below the horizon. I naturally assumed them to be enemies and promptly fled, as two to one would

have involved theoretical capture, and I hoped they had not seen our masts; but they had, and gave chase. It did not take them long to catch us, and then they turned out to be friends—*Anson* and *Collingwood*, with our own Rear-Admiral's flag flying in the *Anson*.

I was ordered to take station astern of the *Collingwood*, and the squadron of three battleships shaped course to the southward, to raid the enemy's coast. From this time, until I was captured, forty-eight hours afterwards, I was under my senior officer's orders and not responsible for my movements; but I could not help thinking that the Rear-Admiral made a great mistake when he hampered himself with a ship whose best speed did not come within four knots of that of his other two ships; though it is just within the bounds of possibility that my judgment upon this point may have been vitiated by a slight tinge of disappointment at being deprived of my independent command.

It may perhaps be of interest to the reader if I give a few brief extracts from my private remark book, covering our movements for the next two days:

"*August 26th.*—Had to stop port engine for several hours, one of the junk ring bolts of low-pressure cylinder having worked out and got loose in the cylinder. Lucky we did not have a real bad smash. Started again at eight p.m.; and the Admiral put me to lead the squadron, without giving me the authority to make the necessary signals as to alterations of course and speed.

"During the night we got in amongst an immense fleet of fishing-boats. Their lights covered the sea. . . . *Anson* and *Collingwood*, without lights, were poking me up behind; and it was far more by good luck than good management that we did not have an accident.

"*August 27th.*—Steering up the Forth for Leith, *Inflexible* still leading the squadron. Weather thick.

No sights. Position by dead reckoning doubtful. This seems to be a peculiar method of conducting a squadron. Sighted May Island. *Collingwood* and *Inflexible* stopped off Inch Keith. *Anson* went on to Queen's Ferry; but finding nobody there, she came back again, and the squadron steered out to sea. *Inflexible* still leading. Looked out sharp for torpedo-boats during the night. Saw none. Weather thick.

"*August 28th.*—At daylight the squadron stopped off the mouth of the Tyne and bombarded North and South Shields for about a quarter of an hour. *Collingwood* went on to Sunderland, and did the same there. The squadron then united and went on to Hartlepool and Whitby, and bombarded them. Weather somewhat thick. Blowing fresh from south-west. At 12.40, when nearly off Scarborough, sighted the enemy's squadron coming up full speed. We turned tail and fled. *Inflexible* easily caught, surrounded, and captured. The enemy's squadron consisted of the *Rodney*, *Howe*, two belted cruisers, two unarmoured cruisers, and the *Ajax* in the distance, though she never got within range. Enemy's Admiral, flying his flag in *Rodney*, ordered me to proceed to Portsmouth."

Thus—so far as I was concerned—ended the naval manœuvres of 1889, the only ones in which I ever took part, which must be my excuse for entering at some length into an account of this mimic warfare.

The final result of the battle of Scarborough was, that our Rear-Admiral, in the *Anson*, escaped alone, through superior speed. The *Collingwood* was caught and captured.

There can be no doubt that our squadron committed a tactical error in continuing to hug the coast, after the enemy must have received telegraphic news of what we were doing, and also of the strength of our squadron, or rather of its weakness compared with his own.

If we had sheered off into the North Sea after bombarding Hartlepool, considering the state of the weather, we should certainly have eluded the enemy and escaped the final catastrophe. But, on the other hand, if "ifs" and "ans" were pots and pans, there'd be no use for tinkers; or if my aunt were my uncle, she would wear different garments.

CHAPTER XIV

H.M.S. "COLLINGWOOD"—MEDITERRANEAN

In November, 1889, I commissioned the *Collingwood* at Portsmouth for service on the Mediterranean station.

I remember, in the days of my youth, there was a tradition which said that the highest ambition of a Post-Captain was the command of a line-of-battle ship in the Mediterranean in time of peace; but in war-time a frigate, as the latter was sure to make more prize-money.

So we see that even in the great, heroic days of old, people did think something about money; notwithstanding that when ships made prize-money, the lawyers generally grabbed more than half of it, as a reward for the immense trouble they took in deciding whether it was legal capture or not; and if there was no doubt upon the subject, they could always make one, so as to have something to argue about—the old story of the monkey, the two cats, and the bit of cheese. And, indeed, these honest gentlemen appear to be up to much the same game in 1916 as their predecessors played during the last great naval war.

The *Collingwood* was a great improvement on the old *Inflexible*. She was new, fast, and powerfully armed, with four breech-loading twelve-inch guns in barbettes. But she only carried a short armoured belt, both ends being entirely devoid of armour, though "protected," as it was humorously called, by a submerged armoured

deck, which would only have helped to capsize her if the ends had been damaged.

The hotly disputed question of armoured belts is, I think, too technical to interest the general reader, and it may be enough to say that the sailors and the naval architects were at loggerheads on the subject. The sailors called the ships with short, thick belts "soft-enders." They thought that the naval architects miscalculated the chances of battle, and they eventually got their way, for all the battleships of the 1889 programme, and all those subsequently built, were provided with long belts. But as the French ships contemporary with the *Collingwood* all had complete water-line belts, I felt somewhat anxious as to what would happen if we had to fight our "hereditary enemy" while I was in command of a soft-ender. But we didn't, and now our gallant and chivalrous enemy, who always fought like a gentleman, is our very dear friend, and long may he remain so, and help us to fight a brutal and unchivalrous enemy.

I had delightful memories of the Mediterranean station, founded on my experience of two years in command of the *Rapid;* but I soon found that it was one thing to command a small craft, too slow to keep up with the fleet, and consequently employed continuously on the most interesting detached services, and quite another thing to command a modern battleship a mere unit of a large fleet, and to be continuously tied to an Admiral's apron-strings.

I mean no disrespect to the Admiral's apron-strings, for having been a Flag-Captain myself, I know how necessary it is to keep up the strictest discipline in a fleet or squadron; yet it does sometimes become a little bit irksome to feel that you must not blow your

nose without asking leave, by signal, of the Admiral to do so.

The three years I spent in command of the *Collingwood* were not without interest, even if they did not quite come up to my rosy expectations. But when *do* our experiences come up to our expectations? And yet what a poor world it would be if we did not form rosy expectations.

For thirty-five years of my life I had been assiduously training myself to handle square-rigged ships under sail and to fight them at close quarters with muzzle-loading guns, even if I had to get up steam to do so. And then, lo and behold! when I come to the summit of a Captain's ambition (a line-of-battle ship in the Mediterranean), I find the rules of the game completely changed. My dearly bought knowledge of seamanship is no longer of any use. I have to furl sails and coil up ropes and begin learning new tricks when nearly fifty years of age! Yet we are all in the same boat—English, Americans, French, Italians, Japanese, Germans. Though the two last have the advantage of having nothing to *un*learn, as neither of them ever were sailors.

Could I, in the days of my youth, have foreseen that I should have to command a line-of-battle ship without masts and sails, I think I should have thrown up the Navy and gone to Kimberley to dig diamonds; or perhaps my training would have better qualified me for rearing sheep in New Zealand. In any case, I do not regret that—like Sam Weller—"my wishion was limited."

All the world knows that Malta is the headquarters of the British Mediterranean fleet, but the non-naval world scarcely knows what a gay place it is in winter; or, rather, I should say, "was," before the

Germans took to slaying women and children on the seas.

Very good opera companies used to come to Malta for the winter months; or it would be more correct to say that some very good individual singers came there, for the choruses and the rank and file were generally very weak. But, then, it was extremely cheap—two-and-six for a stall and boxes in proportion. Several stars, including Albani, made their début at the Malta Opera House. The climate is said to be good for the voice, and the Maltese are very proud at having introduced to the world several great singers. But the opera was not the only attraction. There were balls, parties, picnics, polo, gymkana, and golf. Yes, golf. We used to play golf in the great ditch of the Florianne lines. The "greens" were sanded asphalt, and when there was a strong wind, the player was allowed to place his feet close to windward of his ball, to keep it from being blown off the green. Large feet and loose trousers were an advantage. At some of the holes it was necessary to loft over bastions, and then the royal and ancient game became something like rackets, for after two or three shots you might find your ball behind the tee from which you had started; but it was a game, and as fair for one as the other.

Very grand people came to Malta in the winter. Lords and Dukes and Grand Dukes and Princes and Princesses.

One winter the Grand Duke of Hesse came there with his three daughters: they were also the daughters of our own Princess Alice. One was Princess Henry of Prussia, one Princess Louis of Battenberg, and one (the most beautiful of the three) was unmarried, and afterwards became Empress of Russia. A German

squadron paid us a visit. One of the cruisers was commanded by Prince Henry, and one of the battleships by Captain von Tirpitz, whom I found extremely friendly and agreeable, and quite the hearty Tar. We dined with each other and showed each other round our respective ships, and he specially invited me to go on board his ship to see the crew at general quarters, which I did; and he was obviously very proud of their smartness at gun drill. They certainly were smart, but they moved more like soldiers than sailors, and seemed to me to be lacking in elasticity, though Tirpitz had not allowed them to get fat.

Many of the officers of the Mediterranean squadron got their wives out from England for three or four of the winter months, and as these frequently brought with them other ladies, there were plenty of dances, riding picnics, and other innocent relaxations from the stern routine of naval discipline.

The great event of the season was the fancy-dress ball at the Governor's palace. The various and picturesque costumes of the East were always well represented, and the Maltese tailors and dressmakers were—through long practice—remarkably expert in designing and fitting them. Personally, I found that for one no longer young nor anxious to dance all the fast dances, the costume of an Arab sheik was both cheap and comfortable. Two or three bath towels, a yard or two of white cotton for a turban, and a couple of antiquated pistols hired for the occasion, were all that was necessary.

Some ambitious people went to the expense of getting costumes sent out from England, but it was generally agreed that these did not eclipse the native productions.

On one occasion several ladies were expecting their dresses from England by a P. & O. steamer which

was due to arrive at Malta a few days before the great event of the season: but unfortunately it was blowing a gregale, and the steamer, unable to enter the harbour, went on to Brindisi without stopping. Then there was weeping and wringing of hands, and hastily prepared substitutions, which, though they may not have been much more elaborate than bath towels and pistols, probably looked quite as well as the finery that had gone to Brindisi.

The summer and autumn at Malta are very trying, and no English people who can possibly get away from it stay there between the months of May and November. The fleet does all its cruising and manœuvring during the summer months, and no doubt this has been the case for many years past, even in the old sailing days; and hence the tradition that officers who had spent much of their time on the Mediterranean station were only fine-weather sailors. At least, so they were dubbed by those who had spent their time in stormier seas, but would gladly have served in the Mediterranean if they had had the chance of doing so. Though, indeed, so far as bad weather is concerned, having served in all the seas of the world, except the Arctics, I know of no sea which can boast of worse weather during four or five months of the year than the Mediterranean—not even the North Atlantic, with all its bluster.

The summer cruises of the fleet were nearly always in the Levant. Occasionally one division went to the westward and visited the Riviera, Toulon, and some of the Spanish ports; but my luck always took me East, and I cannot say that "the lure of the East" had any great fascination for me. The first summer was interesting, and I saw many places that I had not seen before. The second summer was less interesting,

and by the end of the third I was (to use the expressive language of the fo'c'sle) "fed up" with the isles of Greece and the classic seas of the Levant.

One of our rendezvous was the spacious harbour of Moudros, in the island of Lemnos, which in the early nineties belonged to the easy-going old Turk, so that we could do pretty much as we liked there. And, indeed, we seem to be doing pretty much as we like there now (1916), though, at the moment of writing, I don't feel quite sure as to whom it belongs, and I feel at least equally doubtful as to whom it will belong when the great war is over. Moudros is a splendid, land-locked harbour, with sufficient depth of water for the heaviest ships and plenty of room. We used generally to hold our regattas either here or at Suda Bay, in Crete, which is also a fine and well-sheltered harbour.

There were red-legged partridges in Lemnos, but it was terribly hot work hunting them in August and September; and it literally was "hunting," for there was very little cover and they ran like hares. One day I was out hunting red-legs in the month of August with some brother Captains and my red setter Ruby. But Ruby was very little good in this climate; she could not stand the heat, and at the end of the first hour she was thoroughly done, and could do nothing but lie down and pant with her tongue hanging out. Then suddenly she disappeared, as if the ground had swallowed her up, which truly it had, for she had come to a well and promptly jumped down it. The well was about six feet deep, with perpendicular sides, and there was Ruby swimming about in the cool water and thoroughly enjoying herself; but she must inevitably have been drowned if we, too, had not found the well. So we made a human chain, and as I was the lightest and

Ruby was my dog, I had to form the bottom link. The next lightest of my brother Captains held me by the ankles and lowered me head first down the well; the other two held on to his legs, and so we fished Ruby out of the well and saved her life. But not one of us got a Carnegie medal, nor were even recommended for it.

One summer the fleet anchored off Jaffa, and there was a great Jerusalem pilgrimage. Nearly two hundred officers and a large number of the men went up. A carriage road had been made from Jaffa to Jerusalem since my last visit to Palestine, and both Admirals went up in a smart barouche; but there were not many carriages, so most of the party rode. Messrs. Cook and Son ran the whole show—transport and board and lodging at Jerusalem. I had been to Jerusalem before, as noted in an earlier chapter; but as the senior Captain had been placed in charge of the fleet, and as the commander of the *Collingwood* did not want to go, I went up again for the sake of the ride and the exercise, remembering the fun I had on my last expedition; but as it was the height of summer and very hot, the whole of the personally conducted expedition travelled by night, and there was no fun, or if there was, we couldn't see it. The hotels were frightfully congested, and it was with great difficulty that we could get anything to eat. Altogether it was a great crush and worry, and I was sorry I went.

Now there is a railway, in fact several railways, all over Palestine and Syria; but I am glad I saw that classic land in its pre-railway days.

During the summer cruises of the fleet we visited all the places of interest in the Levant. Athens, Smyrna, Salonica, Alexandria, Crete, Cyprus, and many of the minor Greek and Turkish islands, including Milo,

where the famous Venus, now at the Louvre, was dug up; though how a gem of such surpassing beauty got into such a miserable, sun-baked, poverty-stricken islet as Milo, is difficult to understand. Truly the glory of the Greek islands has departed.

Was it not Byron who sang (I quote from memory, though I am sure it was Byron):

> "The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece,
> Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
> Where grew the arts of war and peace,—
> Where Delos rose and Phœbus sprung.
> Eternal summer gilds them yet,
> But all, except their sun, has set."

It is very lazy of me not to get up and look for a Byron, but I think the above is not far out, and I can answer for it that their sun is as hot as ever it is likely to have been in their palmiest days, else my red setter would never have jumped down a well.

One of the Greek islands is a very curious place. Santorin is just a bit of the cone of an enormous extinct volcano. Not altogether extinct, either; for a tiny islet, near the centre of what was the crater, still smokes. Only a little more than half of the cone is above water. The inside wall is nearly perpendicular and several hundred feet high; but the outside of it slopes away gradually to the sea, and is extremely fertile, being covered with vines and supporting a dense population. There is no anchorage inside the crater, the water being too deep, but the fleet steamed through it each year that we cruised in the Levant. It was very interesting the first time we went through, less so the second, and by the third time it had become monotonous.

In July, 1891, the late Empress Frederick of Germany (Princess Royal of England) came out to the Mediterranean to visit her daughter the Crown Princess of

Greece, who had just brought into the world the present Crown Prince. Queen Victoria lent the Empress her yacht *Victoria and Albert* to bring her to Gibraltar, where she was met by the *Surprise* (our Admiral's yacht), which took her on to Athens. But as she had decided to stop for a day at Girgenti, in Sicily, to visit the famous ruins of the temple of Zeus, our Admiral sent a squadron, consisting of two battleships, *Benbow* and *Collingwood*, and the armoured cruiser *Undaunted*, to salute and greet Her Majesty. Captain Rawson of the *Benbow* commanded the squadron and Lord Charles Beresford was the Captain of the *Undaunted*.

Some extracts from a letter I wrote home just afterwards will give an idea of our trip in the unrestrained language of home letters:

"I think you know about Girgenti, in Sicily, and Poestum, near Naples. They contain the best preserved Doric temples in existence, with perhaps the exception of the Parthenon at Athens. The Girgenti temples are well worth seeing, so Rawson, Beresford, and I, took a carriage and drove out to see them. The Royal party were there at the same time, but we kept out of their way, as we thought they would probably ask us to lunch if they saw us, and as we were to dine with the Empress the same evening, we did not want to give them too much of our company; but they said afterwards they were greatly disappointed at not meeting us amongst the ruins. There were some wandering minstrels to serenade the Empress—they consisted of three blind fiddlers and a flute-player; and when they had got all they could out of the Royal party, they came on and serenaded us; and with the unerring instinct of the blind, they divined that we were sailors, and to our great astonishment they struck up 'Jack Robinson,' the well-known air of the sailor's hornpipe. This was too much for Charlie Beresford and me, and in spite of the heat, we danced a hornpipe in the temple of

Zeus. And there was no earthquake. . . . But I must tell you all about our visit. The *Surprise* arrived very early yesterday morning, and of course we three Captains went on board in full dress, to wait upon Her Majesty; and she came out on to the quarter-deck, and was very nice, and talked to us for quite half an hour. The party consists of the Empress, two unmarried daughters, Count Seckendorf and Countess Bruehl—a jolly stout lady, very like the governess at ——. There are five maidservants and three flunkeys, and I don't know how they all fit into the *Surprise*, but there they are, anyhow. . . . We all dined with the Empress, who was most gracious and pleasant, and although she has a decidedly sad tone in her voice, she is a fair average talker and seems to take an interest in everything that is going on. She draws very nicely and made an artistic water-colour sketch of the ruins, which she showed us. I took my sketch-book, but was too busy dancing hornpipes to do any sketching. There is always a lion in the path.

"Neither of the Princesses is pretty, but they were friendly and jolly, and much like English girls of the period, even to smoking cigarettes, which Charlie Beresford supplied them with in the evening, after their mother had gone to bed.

"Next morning at eight o'clock the *Surprise* went on her way to Athens, and *Benbow*, *Collingwood*, and *Undaunted* escorted her for about twenty miles. Then we dressed ship, fired a royal salute, played our bands, cheered, wished her a prosperous voyage, and sheered off for Malta. The Empress made a gracious signal to our squadron, thanking us heartily, and saying how much she appreciated our attentions. I expect she is somewhat neglected in Germany now, and seemed thoroughly to enjoy the honours done her by English ships. Lord Walter Kerr's squadron is to meet her at Athens and do the honours there."

And now the Empress is dead, and Rawson is dead, and only Charlie Beresford and me left. King George

of Greece is dead, too; and the Kaiser's sister is Queen of Greece, and doing all she can to help her bullying brother to crush freedom and trample on small nations, but whether she is doing anything to help her adopted country remains to be seen.

During one of the visits of the fleet to Smyrna I went to visit the ruins of Ephesus, and I thought it would be a good way to celebrate my fiftieth birthday if I took all the *Collingwood's* midshipmen there and gave them a picnic amongst the ruins; and ruins they are indeed, scarcely one stone standing upon another. Of all the great cities of antiquity, the sites of which I have visited, Ephesus is the most completely wiped out, and it is difficult to believe that it was once a flourishing seaport, for it is now not only out of sight of the sea, but out of sight of any bit of navigable water of any sort.

As the trains from Smyrna to Ephesus did not suit as to times, I engaged a special, which I got at a very reasonable price, and we were taken there and brought back very comfortably, having spent a happy day amongst the ruins, though I am afraid our lack of archæological knowledge prevented us from making as intelligent a use of our opportunity as we ought to have done.

It was only twenty-three years before our visit that the site of the great temple of Diana had been discovered by Mr. J. T. Wood, who had been sent out by the trustees of the British Museum to search for it, and who dug and searched and excavated round about Ephesus for eleven years (1863-1874). It was in 1869 that he discovered the buried ruins of the temple, nearly twenty feet underground, and a remarkably clever find it was. He first dug up a stone with an inscription on it, which gave an account of processions which took place to and

from the temple, passing out of one gate of the city and coming in by another. Working with this clue, he got his bearings and dug, and finally unearthed the remains of the great temple, sending some of the marble blocks home to the British Museum, thus following in the footsteps of Lord Elgin, who had been so scornfully scolded by Lord Byron for doing the same thing.

I don't pretend to offer any opinion as to whether it is right or wrong for one country to despoil another of any of its treasures of antiquity. Perhaps when there are plenty of chunks of old stone (as the Yankees express it) knocking about amongst people who would probably use them to build cattle byres, there is no harm in doing so. At any rate, we can always console ourselves by saying, "They all do it."

Mr. Wood made sufficient excavations to enable the archæologists to construct a complete plan of the temple as it stood in all its glory, nearly two thousand years ago, when St. Paul was mobbed by the trade unionists for spoiling their business.

Some of the marbles that have been unearthed look wonderfully fresh and crisp, and the huge pieces of the great fluted columns of the peristyle, which stood in double rows, enable one to form in imagination some faint idea of the grandeur of the great temple. But, like Antioch and Baalbec, it succumbed to earthquakes, and then the mud of the River Cayster covered the ruins.

While I am now writing (1916), I find that many of the places in the Levant which I knew well five-and-twenty and more years ago, have become once more famous, and are in the mouths of all the world: Salonica, the Dardanelles, Moudros, Corfu, Avlona, San Giovanni di Medua, and many others. But how different they

VIEW IN SALONIKA BAY.
From a sketch by the author.

must all seem now to what they were in the piping times of peace. Yet the mere fact that one has been to a place and has local knowledge of it and of its surroundings, adds a special interest to everything we hear about it when it is involved in the hurricane of war. Thus Salonica is a place I used to know very well. We got isolated there in the *Collingwood*, in consequence of getting smallpox on board. We really caught it at Alexandria, but it did not break out until we got to Salonica, and as they would not have us anywhere else, we stayed there until we had stamped it out. That is to say, in the gulf, moored in a snug little bay about six miles from the town. Salonica was Turkish then, and we received from the Turkish authorities the greatest kindness, consideration, and attention. They took all our cases, as they occurred, at the Turkish hospital, and looked after them so well that we had only one death out of about thirty cases. We were only in a sort of semi-quarantine, and were allowed to land abreast of the ship and bathe, and walk about the country, but we were asked—though not absolutely forbidden—not to go into the town. The old Turk behaved like a gentleman, as he always does, except when he gets a fit of the tantrums, or is led away by others who want to make use of him to further their own designs.

We were greatly assisted by an Austrian doctor in the Turkish service. He supplied us with some fumigating stuff which he called International Mixture, and he showed us how to use it, on charcoal braziers. It made a horrible smell, but we were able to fumigate the whole ship by compartments, and without clearing out the crew, which was very convenient, and we finally stamped out the smallpox and got a clean bill of health.

During our prolonged stay at Salonica I landed nearly every afternoon with my gun, and shot quail, bustard (the lesser bustard), a few ducks, and teal, and one day I shot two wild swans at the mouth of the Vardar River. There was always a large flock of four or five hundred of them feeding in the very shallow water where this big river runs out into the gulf; but they were very difficult to approach, and not much good for the larder when you got them: though the midshipmen, with their young teeth, managed them all right.

Avlona was another of my happy hunting-grounds. Within a few miles of that town, I got the finest wild boar I ever shot; and there is also a lovely trout stream there, out of which, during the spring and summer, we could always make sure of getting a good basket of speckled beauties, which rose freely to our English flies. Corfu I have already written about, and need not repeat what I have said, save to emphasize once more the supreme act of folly committed by a Radical Government when they gave it away to the degenerate Greeks, who forthwith allowed that beautiful island to go to the devil. It would have come in very handy now, if we had retained possession of it, and it is to be hoped that at the conclusion of this war, it will fall into the hands of someone who will make a better use of it than allowing either an Austrian Empress or a German Emperor to own a palace on its classic shores.

I am tempted to go on writing many more of my memories of the three years I spent in command of the *Collingwood* on the Mediterranean station, but if I do so I shall inevitably find myself overrunning my space, as I did in my first volume of memories; and I feel quite sure the long-suffering reader will not have patience for a third.

So I must get on. But before closing this chapter, I may note that it was during my time in the *Collingwood*, that an attempt was made to effect a radical change in our naval uniform. A committee was appointed by the Admiralty, of which the late Duke of Edinburgh was chairman, and they were ordered to draw up proposals for a "reform" in naval uniform. A copy of these proposals was sent to each Captain then serving afloat, and he was directed to state his opinion thereon.

The nature of these proposals may be gathered from my comments, sent in the form of a letter to my Admiral, the late Sir George Tryon:

"SIR,

"In compliance with your memorandum of December 31st, 1890, calling on me for my opinion upon the recommendations contained in the report of the committee on officers' uniform, I beg to submit the following observations upon some of the fundamental changes proposed therein:

"The proposal of the Committee to alter the shape of the full-dress coat, and to bring the skirt round the front of the waist and modify length of skirt, appears to me to be merely a euphemistic introduction to a foreign-looking semi-military tunic, in no sense 'more suited to the requirements of a modern dress coat' than the present one.

"I am quite unable to agree with the Committee in their assumption that a tail coat is an 'antiquated garment.' So far as my experience goes, it is at the present day the recognized full-dress of every civilized country in Europe and America, even including Ireland, where it is not only the full-dress of the peasant, but his fighting dress also, and it is not considered to be by any means an unsuitable garment for that purpose.

"The proposal of the Committee to abolish the present evening-dress, consisting of a tail coat, white waistcoat,

and plain blue trousers, and to substitute for it a short jacket, embroidered blue waistcoat, and gold-laced trousers, is, to my mind, simply incomprehensible. The former is probably the neatest evening-dress worn by any naval or military service in the world. The latter would be a poor imitation of a horse artilleryman. On the most graceful of figures it would look flashy, incongruous, and unnautical; whilst if worn by men of portly and rotund forms, it would look most ungraceful, not to say comical.

"The proposal to abolish the distinction marks on the sleeve and to substitute shoulder-straps, would not, in my opinion, be any improvement; though I am in favour of abolishing the buttons on the sleeve, even in the case of midshipmen, as the march of civilization and the increased refinement of the young gentlemen renders them no longer necessary.

"In conclusion, I beg to remark that the general tendency of the Committee's proposals appear to be in a military and anti-nautical direction, and I am quite unable to see why the first service in the world should go out of its way to copy anybody."

I heard afterwards that the Duke of Edinburgh was very angry with me for daring to pour ridicule upon his pet scheme for "reforming" our naval uniform; but that did not disturb me much, as the proposals were finally laughed out of court.

It is on record that another Royal sailor—William IV.—introduced red facings, instead of white, into the Navy, but the innovation lasted for only a very short time.

Our latest Royal sailor—George V.—found something better to do than tailoring while he was in the Navy.

Sir George Tryon, I was told, had a hearty laugh over my letter, and sent it on to the Admiralty. He probably felt that his own portly figure would not have looked its best in the proposed evening-dress, not even if the

Paleokastrizza Convent, Corfu.

short jacket had been further adorned with the two-inch tails of a Sicilian brigand, as worn by Mr. Tracey Tupman at the fancy-dress ball.

Sir George, however, had (later) to forward on to me a reproof from My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, who expressed their displeasure at the levity with which I had treated a serious subject.

Their Lordships' displeasure could not have been either deep-seated or vindictive, as they appointed me, shortly afterwards, to the very best Captain's appointment in the Service—Superintendent of Pembroke Dockyard.

CHAPTER XV

PEMBROKE DOCKYARD

I TOOK charge of Pembroke Dockyard on the 9th of February, 1893, and spent two years there, being promoted to the rank of Rear-Admiral on the 20th of February, 1895, and a delightful two years it proved to be. A good house, an excellent garden, a nice compact little dockyard a good long way from London and the Admiralty, and the kindest and most hospitable neighbours I have ever come across.

I have often heard it remarked that the farther you get away from London, the more friendly you find your neighbours, and there is certainly some truth in it. You meet a friend in Piccadilly and pass him with a nod and "How are you, old chap?" But meet the same man at Wei-hai-wei or at the Falkland Islands, and you rush into each other's arms. You don't kiss, as you are neither Frenchmen nor Italians, but you mutually invite each other to dinner and uncork your best.

Pembrokeshire is not Welsh, though it is geographically in Wales. The people don't talk Welsh and don't understand it—they are said to be the descendants of a Flemish colony; but wherever they came from, they speak English and English only, with somewhat of a Devonshire twang, and they call their county "Little England beyond Wales."

It had long been my ambition to wind up my time as a Captain by getting the appointment of Super-

intendent of Pembroke Dockyard, and I considered myself very lucky in doing so. I knew that part of the county well, for my dear old chum Dick Mirehouse (who appears in an earlier chapter of this volume) lived within nine miles of the dockyard, at Angle, which is situated at the mouth of that long, narrow stretch of water known as Milford Haven. Mirehouse and I had been close friends ever since 1869, when I first visited Milford Haven as First-Lieutenant of the *Hercules* and received the hospitalities of Angle. My old friend has gone now. He was eight years younger than me, but has gone on before me. A better companion or more thorough sportsman never pulled a trigger or shared his last sandwich with his friend. Many a good shoot we had together in Asia Minor and around the Bosphorus, and many a good shoot at the homely partridge and pheasant around the little fishing village of Angle, where he lived a patriarchal life and was monarch of all he surveyed.

There were many other neighbours with country places and good shooting within easy distance from Pembroke Dock, and I soon found I had more invitations to shoot than I could properly accept, with due regard to my duties, though these were by no means heavy or exacting.

I used to think sometimes that the Admiralty forgot altogether that there was any such place as Pembroke Dockyard. At any rate, they left us very much alone, and I don't think we got on any the worse for that, or did any less good work than if we had been constantly worried with inquisitive questions. Though, on the other hand, this apparent neglect of attention sometimes cut both ways, for our insignificant little Cinderella of a dockyard did not always get everything

she asked for, especially if one of her big sisters was asking for the same thing at the same time. Yet the ships we built were just as good as anybody else's ships; in fact, we thought they were better. We built the good ship *Renown* at Pembroke, and as I am now writing, I see by the papers she has just gone to the knackers to be broken up after twenty-two years' service. Quite a long life as ships' lives go in the present day.

In June I heard of the loss of the *Victoria* and the death of my greatly respected chief, Sir George Tryon, under whose orders I had been so lately serving in the Mediterranean. The disaster came home to me very forcibly, as I knew all the officers in both *Victoria* and *Camperdown*, and should certainly have been present myself in *Collingwood*, had I not been relieved five months before and appointed to Pembroke Dockyard.

I had such a deep regard for Sir George Tryon and such a thorough appreciation of his great abilities and splendid example of loyal devotion to the Service, that I offered to write his Life, an offer which was accepted by Lady Tryon and his son, and with their assistance I set to work upon my first attempt at big-book writing. But I was very slow about it, and the book was not published until 1897, which perhaps was soon enough after the disaster.

In September the royal yacht *Victoria and Albert* arrived at Pembroke with the widowed Duchess of Albany and her two children on board. The yacht had been lent to her by Queen Victoria for a yachting cruise round the coast of England. Her Royal Highness was very gracious, and invited my wife and me to dine with her on board; and we took her for a drive, to show her the beauties of Pembroke Castle and other places

of interest. The son and daughter were quite children then, and now the little boy has succeeded his uncle as Duke of Saxe-Coburg and must fight against his father's country, and the little girl is married to our own Queen's brother. What a domestic tragedy! And how glad the Duke of Connaught must be that

> "In spite of all temptations
> To belong to other nations,
> He remained an Englishman."

Next year we had another Royal visitor. The Duke of Cambridge came down to inspect some troops, which were paraded for him in the dockyard. He expressed a wish to see the famous Zalinski gun fired. The Zalinski gun was a sort of gigantic pop-gun fired with compressed air. It was sunk into the ground in a trench, and, as well as I can remember, it could not be trained horizontally, though it admitted of some adjustment of elevation. It was more of a tube than a gun, and it hurled into the air (if it went off) a projectile which was more of an aerial torpedo than a shell, and the said projectile was fitted with a delayed-action fuze, which was intended to become operative a few seconds after the missile had struck the water. It was not necessary to hit an enemy's ship in order to destroy her, for if the missile exploded anywhere near her she would be blown to smithereens—at least, so said the inventor.

The Zalinski gun was mounted at Dale, on the western shore of the entrance to Milford Haven, about nine miles from Pembroke Dock; and as the Duke had expressed a wish to see the gun fired, I took him and his staff down to Dale in the Dockyard tug *Stormcock*, and as we were to make a day of it, I provided them with lunch. I had been told that the Duke was fond of

pork chops, so I made ample provision in that respect, and pork chops formed the principal item in my menu. My information was apparently correct, for the Duke polished off three or four pork chops and was in the best of humours, as also was the chief of the staff—the late Sir Redvers Buller, of South African renown.

On our arrival at Dale, orders were given to fire the Zalinski gun and drop a projectile just outside the entrance; while the *Stormcock*, with the Duke and party on board, lay-to just inside to watch the effect; but after waiting a long time and nothing happening, a signal came from the shore to say that the gun would not go off at present and there was no knowing when it would go off—if ever.

The Duke was very grumpy, used some quite uncomplimentary language about the Zalinski gun, and told me to take him home.

Both the Zalinski gun and the Brennan torpedo were very pretty and ingenious devices: but unfortunately they were founded upon the pinch-of-salt plan—a plan which I had myself tested and found fallacious a great many years ago. Indeed, I have a very distinct recollection of the mortification I suffered on that occasion, for I had been assured by those whom I trusted that I had only to put a pinch of salt on the tail of any of the blackbirds or thrushes I saw hopping about in the garden, and I should then be able to catch them with the greatest ease. So out I went with a paper of salt, and cautiously stalked a fine big blackbird with a bright yellow beak; but he would not let me get near enough to him to put the salt on his tail.

I do not know how much the War Office paid for the patent of the Zalinski gun, but I know the Admiralty paid £45,000 for the patent of the Brennan torpedo.

I saw one of the latter worked at Hongkong some years afterwards, and I thought it one of the prettiest toys I had ever seen—quite as ingenious as the clockwork mouse of my childhood, and quite as harmless.

While I was at Pembroke I had the honour of entertaining the unlucky Rosjesvenski, who was then a Captain and naval attaché at the Russian Embassy. He spoke English fairly well, but was shy, reserved, and silent. He was, however, accompanied by an old friend of mine—Captain Cowles, the American naval attaché. Cowles was not a bit shy, and did the talking for both of them.

The reader will no doubt remember that Rosjesvenski was afterwards given an impossible task to perform, that he never flinched, and that he gallantly upheld the honour of his country in the hopeless Battle of Tsushima.

When I had been just two years in charge of Pembroke Dockyard, I was promoted to the rank of Rear-Admiral, and my old friend and old schoolfellow Captain W. Hall was appointed to relieve me. He was taken ill in the train coming down from London, went to a hotel in the town of Pembroke Dock, took to his bed, and in three days he was dead. It was terribly sudden, but the line is not extinct, for his son, who was a smart young midshipman with me in the *Bellerophon*, now commands the battle-cruiser *Queen Mary* in the North Sea.*

I was finally relieved by Captain Balfour, and we had to pack up our belongings, leave our comfortable house and excellent garden, and seek other quarters. Our two years at Pembroke had passed as a watch in the night.

On giving up charge of the dockyard, I submitted

* Captain Hall had been relieved and gone to a post at the Admiralty before the *Queen Mary* was sunk.

to the Admiralty some suggestions in connection with the extension of the yard, and I also called attention to evils incident to the introduction of the political miasma into the working of a royal dockyard; and although I have no intention of inflicting the whole of my memorandum upon the patience of the reader, I think some extracts may be of interest:

" . . . It must therefore be assumed that in the general scheme of the military defences of the port, it is intended to make it a harbour of refuge, where a squadron or a single ship that had been mauled in action could take refuge and effect repairs. But the resources of the dockyard are inadequate to carry out any important repairs, there being no deep-water jetty and no dock that can take an ironclad or even a large cruiser.

" The sum of money required to build a deep-water jetty and an efficient dock has been estimated at £250,000—about the cost of a second-class cruiser. The two works should be carried out concurrently; as the excavation for the dock would go far towards building the jetty, and the materials from an obsolete fort on Pater Point would also assist. The plans have already been submitted to their lordships, and the urgency of the case is scarcely open to question. A dock at Pembroke in time of war would be of more value than several cruisers, and it would take longer to become obsolete."

The reader must please remember that when the above was written, France, and not Germany, was the potential enemy. The work has since been carried out.

" . . . It is very desirable that none of the senior salaried officers of the yard should have any family connection with the district.

" The inconvenience (to use the mildest term) which is caused to the public service through the exercise of the Parliamentary vote by dockyard workmen is

a subject well worthy of serious attention. As a matter of principle, it is obviously improper that anyone holding a direct appointment in the service of the Crown should take an active part in party politics.

" It is probable that in the case of the officers and men of the Navy and Army, the exercise of the Parliamentary vote, though wrong in principle, does no great harm. But in the case of dockyard employees important combinations are made, and influences are brought to bear which are diametrically opposed to the interests of the public service.

" It is not suggested that any voters should be permanently disfranchised, as this would of course require an Act of Parliament and an alteration in the Constitution; but it is submitted that there would be nothing improper (in fact, quite the contrary) in the issue of an arbitrary order by the heads of all departments under the Crown, directing that the right to exercise the Parliamentary vote should be temporarily suspended in the case of all persons in active employment and receiving direct salaries or wages in royal dockyards and other Government establishments, the restriction to be removed on retirement, discharge, or pension.

" This would only be the proper and logical extension of the regulation which forbids officers on full-pay from taking part in political meetings or demonstrations.

" . . . It is well known that dockyard towns change frequently their political complexion from one side to the other, playing a game of see-saw, and trying in turns how much they can get out of each political party. The temporary disfranchisement of dockyard workmen would not affect one party more than the other; it would balance.

" . . . The very term ' dockyard member,' so commonly used, is essentially anomalous, and indicates a political connection between a Government establishment and a party organization, of one side or the other, which is obviously inconsistent with the impartial working of a royal dockyard in the best interests of the State."

I must now ask the reader to give me as much credit as he can for the altruistic and patriotic nature of my memorandum, as I offered myself as candidate for the Pembroke Boroughs immediately after giving up charge of the dockyard, and I should certainly not have had a ghost of a chance without the dockyard vote!

I was unable, however, to raise the wind sufficiently for bribing the outlying districts—though I was quite ready to kiss all the babies—so I had to abandon my project.

CHAPTER XVI

NAVAL ARCHITECTS—PARIS—BERLIN

On my promotion to Rear-Admiral, and consequent supercession from the charge of Pembroke Dockyard, I found myself hard and fast ashore, and not much chance of getting afloat again for some time, as there were not many Rear-Admirals' appointments going at that date. Added to which I felt that my chance of employment was further reduced, in consequence of my having offended an important member of the Board of Admiralty by declining to execute a job which I did not consider quite straight. It was a trivial matter in itself; but I made it a question of principle and personal honour not to break faith with the humblest employee. So I put my ears back, stuck out my two fore-legs, and refused to budge an inch, like a stubborn jackass. And I need scarcely add that I should play the ass again under similar circumstance.

"Hands to dance and skylark!" used to be the pipe at sea, after evening quarters, in the old sailing days.

I know not if our modern tars are too grand and too highly educated (I won't say "cultured," as that has a sinister sound) to skylark, though no doubt they have fun and recreation of some sort to while away their leisure hours, even in war-time. At any rate, I found plenty of time to skylark, with rod and gun, during the three years I was on shore as a Rear-Admiral; though I did not spend all my time skylarking, as I finished the

" Life of Sir George Tryon " and also took much interest in the activities of the Institution of Naval Architects, of which I had been a member—or, to be more technically correct, an associate—since 1885.

The Institution of Naval Architects was founded in 1861, mainly through the exertions of Mr. Scott-Russell, Doctor Joseph Woolley, Lord Hampton, who was the first president, and Sir Edward Reed, who was the first secretary. The Institution has since grown immensely, and has to a large extent become cosmopolitan. We have members from all the civilized countries of the world—or we had up to last year (1915). I have been a member of the council for several years past, and the last active part which I was able to take in its deliberations resulted in the expulsion of our German members; though, strange to say, my proposal was at first met with some opposition. The wily Teutons had got a good deal out of us, and given but little back. I have since—through ill-health—been obliged to resign my seat on the council, and the Institution has done me the quite undeserved honour of making me an Honorary Vice-President for life.

There can scarcely be two opinions as to the influence which the Institution has exercised on the development of both war and mercantile shipping and marine engineering during the fifty-five years of its life. Theoretical and practical questions, which have, to a large extent governed the marvellous strides in ship-building and engineering that have taken place during the last half-century, were initiated and thrashed out at its annual sessions. Not only did the Institution command the services of the most famous exponents of applied science in its particular domain of physical research; but it also encouraged practical seamen to take part in

the discussions which followed the reading of papers by professional naval architects, and thereby checked (though I say so as a sailor) some rather crude and wildcat designs for warship building which emanated from the prolific brains of ambitious and idealistic naval constructors.

I remember on one occasion a quite novel design for a warship being brought forward by a very distinguished naval architect, who shall be nameless, as he was a great friend of mine.

The proposed ship was obviously intended as an effort to check the rapid growth in size and cost of warships, which was then frightening our so-called economists out of their wits. She was of "moderate dimensions." In other words, she was to be cheap. Though I must frankly admit that I have never yet been able to discover the meaning of the term "moderate dimensions," I have a vague sort of idea that it has some connection with the date. At any rate, the ship was to be much smaller than the battleships of her generation, though, of course, more powerful.

To the best of my recollection, she was to be of about five thousand or six thousand tons, instead of ten thousand; she was to be very low in the water, especially at both ends, but rising slightly in the middle, in a sort of hog-back fashion; and right amidships she was to carry one turret, and the turret was to contain the whole of her armament, her navigating station, her boats, her searchlights, her signal mast; and right through the centre of the turret came the funnel!

It occurred to me that it would be rather crowded and rather warm in the turret in action; and during the discussion which followed the description of the ship—illustrated—I ventured to suggest that it would

be rather like a beehive with a red-hot poker shoved through the middle of it.

The ship was never built, so there was no opportunity of proving whether I was right or not.

Naval officers often read papers at the Naval Architects', and their suggestions, even if not always quite practicable, are invariably treated with respect by our professional ship-builders, as embodying the views of seamen. We held the view that as we should have to use the machine, we were entitled to have something to say as to what we wanted.

The last paper I read was on a design for a fast scout. But as I was incapable of designing a scout or any other ship, though I thought I knew what was wanted, I went to my friend Sir Philip Watts, who was at that time Chief Constructor at Elswick, and in collaboration with him a design for a fast scout of "moderate dimensions" was produced. The proposal was well received, and not long afterwards Mr. Watts (as he then was) received the appointment of Director of Naval Construction at the Admiralty. Sir Philip has since built a large number of fast scouts for the Navy, and as they are all more or less founded on the original design—though, of course, with modifications and improvements—I have taken the flattering unction to my soul that I had something to do with the introduction of an extremely useful class of vessel, intermediate between cruisers and destroyers—a class which had previously been entirely lacking.

In addition to the usual spring meetings of the Naval Architects', we used (before the war) to have summer meetings, which were held at one of the great mercantile ports, such as Glasgow, Cardiff, Southampton, Newcastle, etc. But these summer meetings were not conducted

on strictly rigid business principles, like the spring meetings in London. A few business papers were read, and discussed more or less, principally less; and then everyone went sight-seeing. In fact, the summer meetings were always regarded more as pleasant holiday excursions, with interesting visits to the various "works" of the locality, rather than as business meetings. And as we always received the most cordial welcome and lavish hospitality from the local chiefs of industry at every town we visited, it was our own fault if we did not enjoy ourselves.

The most enjoyable summer meeting that it ever fell to my luck to take part in was held in Paris in 1895.

It must be remembered that at this date we were not at all too friendly with the French. France and Russia were thought to be our potential enemies, and not Germany. The Kaiser had not yet sent his Kruger telegram, and it is not too much to say that the great majority of Englishmen believed the Germans to be our best friends and to have no sinister designs against Great Britain or any of her outlying possessions. Otherwise I scarcely think the famous telegram would have given the shock to the whole country which it undoubtedly did.

Notwithstanding, therefore, that the French and British had not yet settled their outstanding disputes on various subjects, or given up their tantalizing policy of mutual pin-pricks (kept alive, as we now know, by Germany, and finally abolished by King Edward), the chivalrous Frenchmen received us in Paris with a very warm welcome, and with that cordial, yet courteous and delicate, hospitality of which the French are the most perfect exponents.

There were formal receptions at the Sorbonne, where

papers on professional subjects were read; a reception at the French Admiralty; and a reception at the Élysée by the President of the Republic. But the Frenchmen did not confine themselves to formalities. Far from it: they exercised their ingenuity in devising all kinds of excursions in and around Paris, which they thought would be agreeable and interesting to the visitors. One of the most enjoyable of these excursions was a delightful trip to St. Germains by river, and an alfresco luncheon, on a lovely summer's day. There were speeches, both grave and humorous, in French and in English. Some of the latter were translated into French (by one of our hosts, whose name I am ashamed to say I have forgotten) for the benefit of those who did not understand English. Now, it must be an extremely difficult undertaking to translate a humorous speech without spoiling it, or at any rate without losing some of the cream of the humour, supposing there is some cream. But, so far from losing anything by translation into another language, the roars of laughter which greeted the French versions showed that the interpreter was a past-master in the cult of humour.

I forgot to say that our invitation to Paris included ladies, if we liked to bring them. Many of us did so. In fact, I think there were as many ladies as men; and I have reason to believe that they thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

It was on the occasion of our trip to St. Germains that a distinguished member of our company suddenly and quite unexpectedly came across James II.'s tomb. "James II. of England buried in France!" he exclaimed. "How came that about?"

Lord Brassey was our President in 1895, and his frank and genial speeches—"avec un accent barbare," as

he himself described it—went to the hearts of our entertainers, and added greatly to the cordiality and success of our visit. But I should be altogether wanting in gratitude and appreciation of the indefatigable labours of my old friend Sir George Holmes if I failed to record the fact that the unqualified success of the Naval Architects' visit to Paris was mainly due to our good-fortune in having him for our secretary. He seemed to carry an inexhaustible supply of lubricating oil, and his great powers of organization, his tact, his unfailing courtesy, his genial Irish humour, and last but not least, that heavenly smile of his, overcame all difficulties and silenced the most confirmed grumbler before he spoke—if a brother Irishman may be allowed so to express it—though it sounds a little like, " Silence, sorr, when ye spake to an officer !"

One very interesting excursion which was provided for our entertainment was a trip in underground Paris. Partly in boats and partly in electric cars, we traversed several miles of a region which in London would be called the main sewer, and which would not be altogether savoury or a place selected for a holiday excursion; but in Paris this great underground system is kept flushed by a rapid stream from the waters of the Seine, which come in at one end of it and go out at the other, so that this great cloaca maxima of Paris is at least as sweet as the Thames at Richmond. There was, of course, nothing but artificial light, and although this was very cleverly managed, we were sometimes very much in the dark.

We did not take our ladies upon this trip.

In the following year (1896) the Institution of Naval Architects received an invitation to hold their summer meeting at Hamburg. It was a most cordial invitation,

which could by no means be declined, nor was the Institution at all loth to accept it. For—I must once more remind the reader—the Germans were, at this date, our very dear friends, our cousins, our blood-brothers; and France and Russia were believed to be our potential enemies.

The Germans, of course, knew all about our reception in France the previous summer; and it soon became obvious that they had made up their minds to make a great effort to surpass, if possible, the warmth of the reception and lavishness of the hospitality with which we had been received in that country. I am not going to say whether they succeeded or not. Such a comparison would be odious, and the reader can form his own opinion.

The *Fürst Bismarck*, one of the newest and largest of the great German Atlantic liners, which were already treading closely on our heels, was sent to Tilbury and placed entirely at our disposal, to take us to Hamburg. The managing director of the Hamburg-Amerika line, to which the *Fürst Bismarck* belonged, came over in the ship and took personal charge of the whole party—about four hundred of us. Herr Laeisz spoke perfect English, and I well remember how we were all lost in admiration of his indefatigable personal attentions to the whole party, and the thorough organization and minute arrangements of every detail which could possibly add to the comfort and enjoyment of our voyage.

Personally I was in great luck during this visit to Hamburg; for instead of having to go to one of the hotels amongst the crowd, I received a very warm invitation from a Mr. Sloman to stay at his house for the term of the visit. I had never met Mr. Sloman,

though I had had some correspondence with him on the subject of ship-building. He was a wealthy ship-owner, and his beautiful country place, situated on high ground facing the River Elbe, was about four miles from Hamburg, or rather from Altona, which faces Hamburg on the right bank of the Elbe.

Mr. Sloman sent his carriage to meet me at the docks, and for four days he entertained me with the greatest kindness and hospitality. He was an old man, partly paralyzed, but he kept patriarchal state amidst a numerous and very lively family circle, all of whom spoke excellent English and all of whom were most friendly and apparently sincere. But one day when Mr. Sloman and I were quite alone he told me, in confidence, something that I have never forgotten, and that has come back to me at intervals with ever-increasing significance, as matters have developed during the last twenty years between Germany and England. He said:

"Personally I have all my life felt the greatest friendship for England. I like the English and all their ways. Many of my ships were built in England, and the great desire of my life has been to see sincere friendship between the two countries. But I must tell you, in all honesty, though it grieves me to do so, that in spite of the lavish hospitality with which you will be received in this country, and in spite of the warmth and apparent sincerity of your reception, there is, deep down in the hearts of the German people, a bitter rankling, and almost universal hatred of England, founded—as I believe—upon envy and jealousy of your great and prosperous Empire and your commercial success."

The reader will please remember that this was said to me nearly twenty years ago, by a prominent merchant and ship-owner, who evidently knew what he was

talking about. Yet Lord Haldane and his colleagues, who were set to rule over Great Britain—and to all intents and purposes over the whole British Empire—did not discover the fact until August, 1914! Or if they did, they shamefully betrayed the trust which was reposed in them.

Before our party left England for Hamburg we naval officers received a private tip from the wide-awake secretary of the Institution—the before-mentioned George Holmes—that in all probability the Emperor would invite the party to go on to Berlin, and that there would be a reception at Potsdam, and that we had therefore better take our full-dress uniforms with us, which we did.

Our business meetings at Hamburg were held at Ludwig's concert house, where our party was received and welcomed by Burgermeister Dr. Mönckeberg, in a cordial speech in German, which was duly translated for us. Our President, Lord Hopetoun, made a suitable reply in English, the peroration of which ran as follows:

"We regard you as our cousins; the two nations are descended from the same stock; their languages are derived from the same root, and have a common origin. We have always been allies in the past. Our forefathers have fought together, and been victorious together, upon many a stubbornly contested field—fought for the freedom of the world, and for the privilege of working out their own destiny in their own way. Neither nation is given to running after empty glory for the sake of empty glory alone. Both nations have deeply planted in their breasts strong domestic tendencies, and an ingrained desire for peace. Surely the world is large enough to hold us both, and there can be no necessity for us to tread on each other's toes. But let us pray that the two great empires, of which

we here this morning are subjects, may ever go hand in hand as the pioneers of civilization, Christianity, and peace."

There can be no reason to suppose that our German hosts, who made equally peaceful speeches, were not as sincerely desirous of peace as was Lord Hopetoun—*until they were quite ready for war.*

All through our visit to Germany I found the greatest difficulty in believing that our kind and genial hosts were playing the hypocrite, and merely trying to lull us into a state of quietude and false confidence until they were ready to attack us and wrench from our grasp Neptune's trident, with the inevitable sequel that they would also get our Empire. Even with Mr. Sloman's words ringing in my ears, I strove hard to avoid forming so low an opinion of human nature as to imagine that an apparently friendly nation could be deliberately practising such hypocrisy.

Shortly after our arrival at Hamburg we received the foretold invitation to go on to Berlin, with an intimation that His Majesty William II. would probably attend our first meeting and listen to the papers and the discussions thereon, even if he did not take part in the latter; for he was said to be quite an expert naval architect himself—or at any rate he thought he was.

I had visited Hamburg in 1855, when I was a midshipman in the British Baltic Fleet, anchored at Kiel (then Danish), waiting for the ice to break up in the Gulf of Finland, so that we might get up as far as Cronstadt and look at it and come home again.

I have not a very vivid recollection of what Hamburg was like in 1855, except that it was an interesting but rather a sleepy kind of place, where our party visited

churches, museums, antiquities, and those sort of things. It was, of course, even at that date, an important mercantile port, but I have no recollection of anything like the intense bustle and strenuous activity that met the eye at every turn during our visit in 1896.

Besides our meetings and the reading of papers, which always took place in the mornings, we were taken in the afternoons to visit the principal building yards, including that of Blohm and Voss, which was working at high pressure, as, indeed, were many of the others.

We were not invited to go to Essen, to see what Herr Krupp was doing: but we were taken to Stettin, and saw there on the building slip a great liner, which subsequently wrested from us, and held for some years, the blue ribbon of the Atlantic, until we won it back again with the *Lusitania* and *Mauretania*, the former of which the Germans have since had the pleasure of sinking.

Our party arrived in Berlin on June 10th, and on the following morning we were received at the Technical High School, Charlottenberg, by the Rector, Dr. Muller-Breslau, and the Senate and students of the establishment, the great hall of which was placed at our disposal for the transaction of business; and after the exchange of complimentary speeches between the Rector and our President, Lord Hopetoun, we sat down and waited for the Emperor, who shortly afterwards arrived with a numerous staff, including Admiral Hollmann (Imperial Minister of Marine), who then opened the proceedings with a flowery speech of welcome; to which Lord Hopetoun replied, saying, amongst other complimentary remarks:

"It is impossible for me to convey to you in adequate terms how great is the feeling of gratitude which we feel towards His Majesty the Emperor, towards His Majesty's Imperial Government, and towards the leading citizens of Berlin, for all that they have done and are about to do to make our visit here a pleasant and instructive one. We are especially honoured by the interest which your august Sovereign takes in all that concerns this Institution, and we desire humbly to express to His Majesty how lively is our sense of his condescension in gracing with his presence this the first meeting of the society ever held in his Imperial capital. We know that His Majesty takes no mere formal interest in our proceedings. We know that he has given the closest study to and has gained practical knowledge of, all that concerns the war fleets and mercantile navies, not only of the Empire over which he rules, but also of the other great maritime Powers."

This was no doubt strictly true. For it was well known that His Majesty possessed the most intimate knowledge and kept the most accurate and detailed records of the ship-building programmes and also the rate of progress therein, of all the maritime Powers. He must therefore have been both delighted and amused when, a few years later, we began "dropping Dreadnoughts" and whining for naval holidays.

Lord Hopetoun then went on to say:

"We in Britain look upon the steady increase in the fleets of the German Empire with a friendly interest," etc.

And as I myself said almost exactly the same thing an hour or two later (also in the presence of the Emperor), I cannot reproach Lord Hopetoun with being any more completely bamboozled than I was; or, indeed, than we all were.

How the wily Teutons must have laughed in their

sleeves! For this took place just six months *after* the despatch of the famous Kruger telegram; and the amiable William was anxiously trying to wipe it off the slate, as his more cautious advisers had, in the meantime, told him that Germany was not yet ready for the great grab for Neptune's trident.

Two papers were then read and discussed. The first was, "On the Development in Design and Construction of German Men-of-war," by Herr Dietrich, Chief Constructor of the German Navy. And the second was, "The Classification and Relative Power of Warships," by Professor Elgar, one of our own Vice-Presidents.

The Emperor sat out both papers and the discussions thereon, and appeared to take the keenest interest in the proceedings.

I opened the discussion on Professor Elgar's paper; and, amongst other remarks, I was foolish enough to say that I regarded every ship added to the German Navy as a ship on our side. At which the Emperor bowed significantly and called "Hear, Hear!"

I must have temporarily forgotten Mr. Sloman's warning.

Amongst other entertainments given in our honour there was a grand review, mostly cavalry; and the Emperor, in person, led a charge of the Imperial Guard. He also gave Charlie Beresford a mount, so that the latter was able to see a good deal more of the review than we on foot could do. I had neglected to tell His Majesty that I could ride, or perhaps he would have given me a mount also, as a reward for what I said about the German ships.

Next evening the Naval Architects were invited by the Emperor to go to Potsdam, and he ordered a special

train to take us there. This entertainment was a very grand affair. The four naval officers of the party wore their full-dress uniform, and the others evening-dress. There was a military tattoo by torchlight, performed by the massed bands of the Imperial Guards regiments, very impressive and very picturesque, though the goose-step looked rather silly. It was a lovely summer's night, and we all stood on the steps in front of the palace. The Emperor, the Empress, and a large number of minor royalties—if I may so describe without offence the numerous German princelings—mixed with our party and were very gracious and friendly. The Emperor himself was quite familiar and jocular, talking without restraint on a great variety of subjects, and paying particular attention to the late Sir William White, who was at that time Chief Constructor of the British Navy.

We were informed that this performance of the torchlight tattoo of the Guards' bands had never before been given for the entertainment of anyone of less importance than a crowned head. So that with this knowledge, and the gracious attentions of all the royalties, a stand-up champagne supper, and a special train back to Berlin, our poor weak heads were quite turned; and I think that the majority of us would have voted that William II. of Germany was "a jolly good fellow." I am not at all sure that, with a little encouragement, we should not have struck up that hackneyed and somewhat vulgar ditty, as our special train steamed out of the station, though I am glad to say we didn't.

His versatile Majesty tried very hard to wipe out that Kruger telegram; but he really only succeeded in smudging it a little.

The Potsdam entertainment marked the conclusion of the Naval Architects' visit to Germany. The party then broke up, and the members found their way home by various routes.

I came home through Holland, as I was anxious to visit Amsterdam and The Hague. I found them both very interesting, particularly the latter, notwithstanding that Mr. Carnegie had not yet built the palace of peace for Europe to mock at.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CHINA STATION—WEI-HAI-WEI

In October, 1897, I was informed that the Admiralty were pleased to appoint me as Rear-Admiral second in command of the China Station. That the *Grafton* first-class cruiser was to be my flagship; that she was already on the station, and that I might take passage out in the *Edgar*, a sister ship, which was sailing shortly to strengthen the China Squadron. Their Lordships also "requested" that I would not solicit the privilege of selecting my own Flag-Captain or Flag-Lieutenant, but take on those of my predecessor, already in the *Grafton*.

The "request" of the Admiralty to a naval officer differs not widely from an order; and although Admirals are nearly always allowed to nominate their own Flag-Captains, and invariably their own Flag-Lieutenants, I did not think it would be judicious to quarrel with my bread-and-butter; so I pocketed my pride and complied with their Lordships' "request." They were graciously pleased to allow me to select my own secretary; and as matters turned out, I do not think, if I had searched the whole Navy List, I could have improved upon Captain Jones and Lieutenant Smith (their real names), for they proved to be well up in their business, loyal and true, and excellent messmates. So my secretary (Clutton Baker) and I joined the *Edgar* at Plymouth in November, and sailed for China via the Suez Canal.

The voyage was uneventful, save that we had a curious experience of the difficulty of sinking an oil-ship in the Red Sea.

One morning, on our passage from Suez to Aden we overtook a British steamer laden with oil, from Batoum for Bombay. She signalled that she was on fire, and asked for assistance. We stopped and sent a party on board, to help to put the fire out; but as it soon turned out that her coal bunkers were badly on fire and apparently no chance of saving the ship, the Captain decided to abandon her. We took the crew and their belongings on board the *Edgar;* and as the ship was right in the track of the busy trade-route, up and down the Red Sea, I decided that she must be sunk, as otherwise she would be a great danger to navigation.

The burning oil-ship appeared to offer an excellent and realistic target for exercising the crew of a newly commissioned ship at a little practical gunnery. So the Captain of the *Edgar* beat to quarters and blazed away at the burning ship. There was a slight roll of a sea on, and at first the gunners could not hit her, until we closed in a bit, and then the hits were fast and frequent; but nothing seemed to happen, very much to our surprise, as we thought that about ten minutes of such treatment would send her to the bottom. Then 6-inch and 9·2 shell were fired into her; but still nothing happened, beyond great clouds of black smoke. Then the *Edgar* closed in still nearer and riddled her water-line on the near side, until at last she listed slowly over and turned turtle; but instead of sinking, as any respectable ship would have done, she remained afloat, bottom up, with the whole length of her about two or three feet above water, and the waves breaking over her, like a half-tide rock or the back of a dead whale.

This was tantalizing, after all our trouble, for the fire was now extinguished, the ship's bottom was intact, and she was a far greater danger to navigation than if she had been the other way up.

The final act was to get close alongside and riddle her bottom with the little six-pounders, until it was like the top of a pepper-caster, so that the air, which was keeping her afloat, could escape; and then she sank.

It seemed strange that any ship, except a timber ship, should take such a lot of sinking, until one remembered that, in the first place, oil is lighter than water. Secondly, that the oil was not in bulk, but enclosed in tins, holding three or four gallons each, and that in all probability, not one of the tins was absolutely full—*i.e.*, contained a little air: and finally that the tins were packed in wooden cases, of a convenient size for handling. We live and learn.

Having disposed of the burning oil-ship, we went on to Aden, where we landed her crew, and then on to Colombo and Singapore, where I found the *Grafton* waiting for me; and I turned over to her, taking on my predecessor's Flag-Captain, his Flag-Lieutenant, and all his staff of servants.

I was not given much time to shake down or to renew my former acquaintance with Singapore; for the very next day after joining the *Grafton* I got a telegram from my Commander-in-Chief (Admiral Buller) to go on to Hongkong, and then to go on to the north and meet him at Port Hamilton.

Admiral Buller's command of the China Station was just coming to an end, for which I was very sorry, as he was an old and sincere friend; but my regret was mitigated by the knowledge that he was to be relieved by another old friend, Sir Edward Seymour, who later

commanded that gallant, though unsuccessful, international expedition which set out from Tien-tsin to try and relieve the European legations at Pekin, when they were threatened by the Boxer rebellion.

Port Hamilton is a snug little harbour in a group of small islets off the south coast of Corea, to the north-east of the large island of Quelpaert. The group was taken possession of by the British, as a sort of look-out post, to watch the advance of the Russians towards the Corean Peninsula. It was, however, found to be quite indefensible, in view of modern armaments, and we abandoned it shortly afterwards, when the Japanese handed over Wei-hai-wei to our keeping.

At the time of my visit to Port Hamilton it was "garrisoned" by a small detachment of Marines. The ubiquitous Marine! The true pioneer of British Empire, who gets most of the kicks and very few of the ha'pence. The finest and most loyal corps in the service of the Crown, and I care not who is given second place. "England's sheet-anchor," as the great Lord St. Vincent called them.

Port Hamilton was a very "backward" place, even for the long-suffering Marine to be banished to. There were a few wretched, poverty-stricken inhabitants of Corean stock, very little flat ground, very little cultivation, rocky soil, and the greater part of the islands covered with a coarse scrub. The time hung heavy on the hands of the Royal Marines in these inhospitable islets: but they were ready—as ever—to make the best of it. So they wrote to some friends at Shanghai to send them some live pheasants, wherewith to stock the islands. The consignment in due time arrived, consisting of six cocks and one hen.

It is now a matter of history how the Japanese on

two occasions captured the fortress of Port Arthur, first from the Chinese and then from the Russians. My two years on the China Station came in between these two captures, at a time when the Japanese were feeling very sore at being confronted with an ultimatum from three great European Powers, Russia, France, and Germany, ordering them to quit Port Arthur and return it to the Chinese, on the ground that their occupation of it would disturb the balance of power in North China!

Russia, of course, wanted it for herself, and shortly afterwards took it ("leased" it, as she called it) from China, and strongly fortified it. France naturally supported her Ally; but Germany's interference was absolutely gratuitous and uncalled for, as she had at that time no possession in North China, which the upset of the balance of power could in any way affect. Her two useful missionaries had not yet been murdered; and although she no doubt already had her eye on Kaou Cheou, she had no shadow of even a "diplomatic" excuse for helping the other two Powers to bully Japan out of her hard-won conquest. The Japanese felt this very deeply, and although they felt bitter against Russia and France, they felt doubly so against Germany, for her gratuitous interference and insult. The two former were her open enemies in this matter, but Germany was her false friend, who stabbed her in the back; and she never forgave it; so that it must have afforded her intense satisfaction to turn out of their possession the invaders of Kaou Cheou, who had been ordered by their War Lord to give no quarter, though it is not on record that the heathen Japs received similar orders to give no quarter to the Christian Germans when they expelled them.

It was in consequence of the Russian occupation of

Port Arthur in 1898 that Japan offered Wei-hai-wei to the British, as she felt that her position there would be strategically a false one, in view of the certainty that Russia intended to remain permanently at Port Arthur, and make of it a formidable fortress, only ninety miles by sea from Wei-hai-wei. So the Japs undoubtedly did a very wise thing in planting their only friend in an exposed position vis-à-vis with their prospective enemy, whom they were not yet in a position to challenge for the hegemony of the Yellow Sea; but they clearly foresaw what was coming: they foresaw that there could not be two kings of Brentford, that there was not " room enough for both "—according to the silly parrot-cry of our own peace-at-any-price party. So they lay low for the present, with bitterness in their hearts and a grim determination to prepare to fight for their lives. For it was veritably a case of the life and independence of the Japanese nation versus the aggrandizement of the Russian nation. Both sides knew that there was not room enough for both, and that there could be no compromise; but the Russians made the unforgivable mistake of underestimating—if not despising—their prospective enemies, and they paid the usual penalty.

I saw a good deal of Japan during the years 1898-99, and I watched, with the greatest interest and admiration, the steady, silent, strenuous preparations, both naval and military, which the nation was making for what they all seemed instinctively to know would be a fight for their lives.

I don't remember exactly what I thought of it—I mean what I thought of their prospect of success against Russia, or, indeed, whether I formed any distinct opinion on the subject at all; but I do remember that

almost every European or American that I talked to on the subject laughed at the idea of little Japan, with her insignificant army and navy, pitting herself against the mighty Russian Empire. "Jack the Giant Killer" might be a very pretty story to amuse children; but we all know that that kind of thing does not often happen in real life. But it did this time.

When the Japs captured Wei-hai-wei from the Chinese, it was very strongly fortified. These fortifications had been completed a few years before by the German Colonel of Engineers von Haneken. There were several very powerful batteries, armed with the latest model of Krupp's 9·4 inch guns, and these commanded the only deep-water entrance to the town and harbour; so that the place was considered, practically speaking, impregnable from any attack from seaward. But it does not appear to have occurred to either the Chinese or their German adviser that there was any possibility of the place being attacked from the land side. For was there not behind it the great Chinese Empire, with four hundred million inhabitants? So the formidable Chinese batteries, with their Krupp guns, *were* batteries, and not forts. That is to say, their guns only pointed seaward, and they had no backs to them. Therefore the Japs, having defeated the Chinese Navy at the battle of Yalu and gained command of the sea, transported an army to the south side of the Shantung promontory, marched across an easy bit of country, completely surprising the Chinese, took all von Haneken's fortifications in rear, destroying first the batteries on the mainland and then those on the island, capturing the place and sinking the only remaining Chinese ironclad, which had escaped, though damaged, from the battle of Yalu.

It was reported that the Chinese complained bitterly at the mean tactics of the Japanese, attacking them in rear, instead of coming up boldly from the front, in the direction in which their guns were pointed. No doubt they scolded von Haneken, if they could get at him. I never heard what became of that gentleman. He had probably gone home before the attack, with the Chinamen's dollars in his pocket.

As soon as the Japanese captured Wei-hai-wei they destroyed all von Haneken's fortifications. They blew up the batteries and smashed the Krupp guns and their mountings. The business was very completely done, and when we took over the place the whole of the fortifications were a mass of ruins. Then arose the question of whether *we* were to fortify the place or not. The controversy lasted a long time. Opinions were divided. Both Sir Edward Seymour and I were strongly in favour of fortifying the island at least. We pointed out that in the event of war with Russia—the most probable war at that time—the place would be a dangerous trap for our ships if it was left unfortified, in view of the fact that Port Arthur, only ninety miles across the gulf, was being strongly fortified by the Russians. The extreme "blue-water school" at home in their arm-chairs were against any fortification. They argued that fortifications were no good, because whatever Power eventually held command of the sea would eventually be able to take Wei-hai-wei. Which was probably quite true, though the word "eventually" somewhat vitiated the wisdom of the argument.

After a lengthy correspondence on the subject, it was decided to mount a few 9·2 guns on the island, with a light anti-torpedo-boat armament, to command

the entrance. Quite inadequate to resist a serious attack, but just enough to allow a powerful enemy the honour and glory of saying that he had captured a British fortified port. That silly idea about "moderate armaments" was already becoming fashionable. It would make a show, without costing much money. Security on the cheap. But it showed unmistakably that the amiable gentlemen into whose hands had fallen the government of the British Empire were not blessed with any very clear conception of the meaning of the word "war."

Colonel Lewis, R.E., and a small staff of Royal Engineers and sappers were sent out from England to select sites and prepare for the moderate fortification of Wei-hai-wei Island. Emplacements were constructed, and a good many thousands of pounds were spent in preparations, when a sudden change of policy took place, and it was decided to abandon the works and give up all ideas of fortifications—even moderate ones.

Having said so much about Wei-hai-wei, I am now prepared to admit frankly that I think it was very lucky we did not fortify the place. For this reason: As matters *now* stand, the only people who could take it from us are the Japanese. So long as they remain our friends and allies, the place is safe; and if they were to become our enemies, they could take it whenever they wanted it, in spite of the moderate—or, indeed, of any—fortification we could have provided for its defence. The anti-fortification people have therefore proved to be right, though I doubt if even the boldest of them would have the audacity to claim that he foresaw in 1898 the result of the Russo-Japanese War, which took place seven years later.

Before we occupied Wei-hai-wei, our squadron in

North China was rather in the air—so to speak. We, of course, had the use of the Japanese ports, as also had the Russians; and Nagasaki was at times rather crowded with British and Russian warships. There were two Russian Admirals, Doubassoff and Reunoff, and I was very good friends with both of them; though, of course, we were well aware of the strained relations between our two countries, and that we might any day be trying to sink each other's ships, by the latest, the most scientific, and most approved methods. But in the meantime we observed all the courtesies of friendly nations; and I had more than once the pleasure of entertaining Madame Doubassoff and her children on board the *Grafton* during my visits to Nagasaki.

In March, 1898, matters appeared to be getting critical between England and Russia. The Russians had seized Port Arthur, and were fortifying it with all haste. Warlike speeches were made in the British Parliament. We were not going to allow Russia to be predominant in China and to cut us out of our trade interests. We wanted the open door, and we were not going to allow anyone to slam the door in our faces, and so on. Quite an angry growl from the British lion. So that it looked as if we might be at war any day, as it certainly did not look as if Russia was going to draw back. I was at Chefoo at the time, in the *Grafton*, with a squadron of cruisers, including that under-armed monstrosity the *Powerful*, two belted cruisers (with all their armour under water), and a few smaller vessels. The Russians had a greatly superior squadron at Port Arthur, within ninety miles of us, and our best ships were down south with Sir Edward Seymour. Our telegraphic communications from Chefoo through China were not to be trusted, and if there was

to be war, it was tolerably certain that Admiral Doubassoff would get news of it before I should; so I cleared my ships for action and kept them so for several days, until matters quieted down a bit. We heard afterwards that the Russian squadron at Port Arthur did the same, fearing that we should get first news and attack them. I knew quite well that my friend Doubassoff would not respect the neutrality of Chefoo; nor should I if I had been in his place, as Chinamen don't count in such cases.

A few days later I received a reinforcement, in the shape of the battleship *Barfleur* and the cruiser *Edgar;* and then the Commander-in-Chief himself arrived with two more battleships, *Centurion* and *Victorious*. Nothing happened; it all went off in smoke. The British lion went to sleep again, and left it to the sturdy little men who fight under the banner of the Rising Sun to turn the Russians out of Port Arthur and then the Germans out of Kaou Cheou.

I served for fifty-one years in the Navy, all over the world, and I have never had a chance!

Not counting Japanese and Chinese Admirals, there were six European Admirals flying their flags in North China in 1898—two British, two Russian, and two German—besides an American commodore, Dewey, who distinguished himself at Caveté in the Philippine Islands. Admiral Deitrich was the German Commander-in-Chief, and Prince Henry of Prussia was the Rear-Admiral—my "opposite number," as we express it in the Navy. Prince Henry was very friendly, and when we met in port we used to dine with each other, and sometimes land in the afternoon and go for a walk in the country. One day he and I and Captain Lambton of the *Powerful* walked up a steep hill behind Chefoo.

It was a hot day, and we sat down to rest on a tombstone in a deserted Chinese graveyard, and lit our cigarettes. A stream of ants was running by, and Prince Henry immediately set to work killing them as fast as he could, with the end of his walking-stick. I thought it was a senseless employment of the power he possessed to take life in that wholesale manner, ants not being classed as vermin; but I held my tongue and did not interfere with his "sport." Not so Captain Lambton, who got quite annoyed about it, and suggested that as the ants were doing no harm to anyone, Prince Henry might stop killing them. Prince Henry did not stop killing the ants, and as the argument on the subject was getting rather warm and seemed to threaten a breach of international diplomatic relations, I got up and proposed that we should go on with our walk.

It was a small matter, but a straw will show how the wind blows as well as a gilded weathercock.

Not long after the Russian scare, there was another scare in North China. Sir Claude MacDonald, our Minister at Pekin, telegraphed to me that that extraordinary old woman the Dowager Empress was kicking up a bobbery and cutting off heads; that it was reported the Emperor had been poisoned, and there would probably be a revolution, and the European Embassies might want assistance. But this scare also went off in smoke. There *was* a revolution, but not for another two years, when I had left the station.

Fifty-one years in the Navy, and always either too early or too late.

At Chefoo I made the acquaintance of Bishop Scott, the Anglican Bishop of North China. He gave me an amusing account of the manner in which he made his episcopal visitations, in a wheelbarrow. The Chinese

wheelbarrow is a peculiar contrivance. It is a *bona-fide* one-wheeled conveyance, with the shafts behind. The wheel is about three feet in diameter, and is generally a solid disc of wood, but instead of the central box arrangement, there are seats at each side, on one of which sat the Bishop, facing sideways, and on the other was placed his portmanteau to balance him. One man in the shafts behind and another with a rope over his shoulder dragging in front completed the Bishop's state-coach. The great beauty of the wheelbarrow (as the Bishop explained to me) was, that it could traverse the narrow paths which separate the paddy fields, these being often little more than a foot wide, as I can testify to my own knowledge, when shooting snipe and slipping in occasionally. About fifty years ago Bishops used to make their visitations in four-in-hand drags; but that was in Ireland, not China. Moreover, no drag that I ever heard of made the sweet music of a solid-wheeled Chinese wheelbarrow, to relieve the monotony of a tedious journey.

CHAPTER XVIII

JAPAN—COREA—HOME ACROSS AMERICA

In October, 1898, I was ordered to Hongkong in the *Grafton*, and directed to hoist my flag in the *Barfleur*, which was paid off there, and a new crew and officers sent out from England for the new commission. On this occasion I was allowed to select my own Flag-Captain, and I was lucky enough to obtain the appointment of the present Sir Stanley Colville, whom I asked to select his own Commander, and his choice was the present Sir David Beatty, who joined us a little later on. I could not have had two better men.

While we were shaking down in the *Barfleur* at Hongkong, the Fashoda scare occurred. Very warlike telegrams. The funds went down, and for several days it looked as if war with France was highly probable. Admiral Seymour and nearly all the ships were up in the north. The French squadron was probably at Saigon, and it seemed as if I was really going to have a chance at last; but once more it all went off in smoke.

I took the opportunity of the scare to go round the fortifications of Hongkong, to see if the place would be able to take care of itself, in case I went south in the *Barfleur* to look for the Frenchmen, and should happen to miss them. I found the Brennan torpedo in full working order; a very pretty toy, quite up to date, but, as I have already alluded to this weapon in a former chapter, I need not repeat myself. Further

than the Brennan torpedo, the fortifications of Hongkong in 1898 could not be considered up to date. In fact, "obsolete" would be a more correct expression, as most of the guns were muzzle-loaders. There were a few breech-loading six-inch guns, but these were on very old-fashioned mountings, and there was no quick-firing gun bigger than a six-pounder. The scare blew over, and Hongkong went to sleep again.

Shortly after this we went to the north in the *Barfleur*, and I saw a good deal more of Japan and Corea than I had done before. Corea was the great bone of contention between the Japs and the Russians; and no wonder, for it lay between Vladivostock and Port Arthur, and if the Japs could establish themselves in one of the fine harbours in the south of the peninsula, they would be able to sever all sea-communication between the two Russian fortresses. On the other hand, if the Russians could get control of one of these harbours—Misanpho, for instance—they would practically command the Straits of Tsushima, and be a deadly menace to the Island Empire. Corea herself did not count. Such government as there was in the capital (Seoul) was corrupt, rotten, and tottering—ready to fall an easy prey to intrigue or bluff, or to the dollars of the highest bidder.

Seoul, when I visited it, was a hot-bed of intrigue, tempered with an occasional murder. Our present Ambassador at Pekin—Sir John Jordan—was at that time Consul-General and Chargé d'Affaires at the Corean Court; where the imbecile King—or "Emperor," as he ostentatiously called himself—was more of a prisoner than a King.

The seaport of Seoul is Chemulpo, about twenty-five miles from the capital, and there is a railway *part* of the way; but it was so uncertain when the trains would

start, and still more uncertain when they would arrive, that when Mr. Jordan and Bishop Corfe, of the Corean Anglican Mission, came to stay with me on board the *Barfleur*, they preferred to walk the twenty-five miles rather than trust to the trains. They were caught in one of the sudden blizzards—of which we had several unpleasant experiences—and when they arrived on board the *Barfleur* the Bishop's venerable white beard was frozen stiff, and I had to hold his head in front of the stove for some time, to thaw him. Bishop Corfe had served for many years as a naval chaplain, and had well earned the comfortable billet of Chaplain at Portsmouth Dockyard, which he held when the call came for a volunteer to take charge of a projected mission to convert the Corean heathens to Christianity. Out stepped Corfe, and, though getting on in years, but young in spirit, he resigned his post and his well-earned rest, packed up his traps (not many), organized the mission, got himself rated a Bishop, and, with true missionary zeal and self-sacrifice, banished himself to that most unpromising and inhospitable land, where I found him hard at work, and where he continued to work for many years with the most admirable pluck and energy, and utter disregard of all personal comfort. Of course, missionaries don't look for comfort; but there are degrees of discomfort, and, as I afterwards paid Bishop Corfe a visit at his mission home, I had a fair opportunity of apprizing the amount of comfort he allowed himself, and I came to the conclusion that his frugality was about "the limit," to use a modern expression. His brother-Bishop in North China could at any rate get a wheelbarrow to travel in, but Corfe could not even get that.

Mr. Jordan informed me that the Emperor of Corea

had expressed a wish that I should be presented to him, adding that it was desirable I should be attended by a brilliant staff, in order to make an impression upon His Majesty, who was rather fond of show. I thought that my Flag-Captain, Flag-Lieutenant, and Secretary, constituted a particularly brilliant staff, especially in full dress; but, in order to make our visit still more brilliant and impressive, I invited six more officers—including the Major of Marines—to come up and be presented. They were nothing loth to see what the Corean Court was like, even at the trouble of putting on their full-dress uniforms. So up to Seoul we all went, and were presented to His Imperial Majesty, who stood behind a small square table, with a rusty red cloth upon it, and his hands spread out, as if he wanted to play a game of cards or show us some conjuring trick. His surroundings were equally curious, and on several occasions during the audience it was with the greatest difficulty that we could keep our countenances and avoid laughing right out. His Majesty seemed to be particularly interested as to the health of our gracious Sovereign, Queen Victoria, and questioned me minutely on the subject. He appeared to think that I was in the habit of dining or lunching with Her Majesty at least once a week, and was greatly surprised to hear that I had never had that honour. Everything, of course, had to pass through an interpreter, and as that gentleman was not quite a master of the English language, and took some time to arrange his thoughts, we got on very slowly, and the audience must have lasted at least half an hour. The red tunic of Major Luke, R.M.L.I., seemed to fascinate the Emperor, who left his table and came round and poked the red tunic with his forefinger, apparently to see what it was made

of. He fingered the Major's medals and asked him some curious questions, which would have floored anybody but a Marine. Yet through this trying ordeal the Major never turned a hair. Not a smile could be seen on his lips, not even a twitch of the facial muscles (which was more than could be said of the rest of the brilliant staff). The Major was adamant, and set us all a striking example of self-control. He was as cool and collected as he is reported to have been when, next year, he gallantly led a storming-party of the *Barfleur's* Joeys at the capture of the Tien-tsin forts. Alas! he will visit no more earthly Kings, for the "Last Post" has been sounded for the gallant sea-soldier.

I have in my possession a delightful caricature of the Emperor of Corea, by my friend Captain Smith-Dorrien, R.N. It appeared in *Vanity Fair*, and is really very like him, attitude and all. In the evening there was a banquet for us at the palace. The Emperor did not appear himself, but he sent some of his high officers of State to entertain us, and we were given an excellent French dinner, with very good wine.

Seoul in 1899 was not an imposing city. Most of the houses were one-storied hovels, and the inhabitants looked like degenerate Chinese. But when we remembered that only twenty years before our visit foreigners were not allowed inside its walls, and the "hermit kingdom" was closed to all Europeans, we were not a little surprised to see electric tramways, an English mission nurse riding a bicycle down the main street, and to eat a good French dinner at the King's palace.

On referring to my private journal, I find a note that "Mr. Jordan prophesies a revolution in China." It broke out next year.

From Chemulpo we went to Misanpho, to which port I have already alluded. It is at the southern end of the Corean Peninsula, and goes by various names: "Douglas Inlet" and "Sir Harry Parkes Sound"; which, together with such names as "Port Hamilton" and "Port Arthur," indicate that these coasts, islands, and harbours, were surveyed and charted by our officers for the benefit of the whole world as well as for ourselves.

Misanpho—to give it its native name—has the makings of an ideal fortified naval base. There are, in fact, three harbours, one inside the other, the outer one being a spacious roadstead, well sheltered by islands, and quite comparable to Spithead. A little farther up the great inlet there is a large and perfectly landlocked harbour, with a depth of about seven fathoms all over it—an ideal anchorage for ships of all classes. Then inside this, again, there is a still larger shallow harbour, with three and four fathoms in it, which would hold light cruisers, destroyers, and small craft. The rise and fall of tide is small, and no doubt our friends the Japs will now make what use they think proper of a port endowed by Nature with such vast and promising possibilities.

I paid several visits to Misanpho. The Russian and Japanese warships were also frequently coming and going, and landing surveying-parties for land survey, the nautical surveying having been completed some years previously by the British. The place was at that time a sort of No-man's-land. Both Russia and Japan knew that sooner or later they would have to fight it out, and that the possession of Corea would be of the highest strategic importance. Indeed, it is not too much to say that, had Russia once been able to get sufficient troops across the Yalu River and establish

herself firmly in the Corean Peninsula, Japan would have been done for. It was very amusing to us to watch the rival surveying-parties climbing about the hills with their theodolites, pegging out claims with their little national flags on broomsticks, and evidently looking for sites whereon to erect their batteries so as to command the entrance to this splendid harbour. But, as all the world now knows, the Japs made Fusan—a few miles to the eastward of Misanpho—their jumping-off place and the terminus of their Corean railway, no doubt for good and sufficient reasons, though the harbour is not to be compared to that of Misanpho.

Looking back now on the results of the Russo-Japanese War, not only Russia herself, but all Europe, except Germany, may rejoice that the Japanese frustrated the ambitious schemes of expansion to which Bismarck and his successors had systematically urged their "Eastern neighbour," in order to further their own selfish designs by diverting attention and military power to the Far East instead of towards the West. For had Germany been as ready to strike in 1907—when Russia was down—as she was seven years later, "Deutschland über Alles" might now have been an accomplished fact: Europe enslaved and the British Empire shattered to fragments.

We used to get good wild-pheasant shooting at Misanpho, also wild duck, teal, and quail, but no woodcock or snipe. We had to work for the pheasants, as they were spread out over a large extent of country, the covers were thick, the hills were steep, the birds got up in all sorts of unexpected places; and if the Admiral, with the full strength of the staff—the Flag-Captain, Flag-Lieutenant and Secretary, and the coxswain and galley's crew for beaters—managed to bag

six brace of pheasants and a few quail, they thought they had had a good day. They had, at any rate, had a good day's exercise in a fine bracing climate; for it would be hard to beat the climate of southern Corea during the winter months.

I saw a good deal more of Japan in 1899 than I had ever done before, and the more I saw of it the better I liked it. It is a most fascinating country, and so are the people themselves. They are not perfect; nor have I, in all my travels, come across any people who are perfect, though the splendid patriotism, devotion to their Emperor, and quixotic (as Europeans think it) sense of personal honour, to be confirmed if necessary by deliberate suicide, are traits of character which are certainly not found in a feeble or degenerate race. They acquired a bad name for commercial integrity when first they started in international commerce, in competition with those nations which had been trading in the Far East for many years; and I have often heard European merchants compare the Japanese most unfavourably with the Chinese. Thus: "I would trust a Chinese merchant anywhere. His word is as good as his bond. He would sell his wife and children rather than not pay his debts. But I would not trust a Japanese merchant farther than I could see him."

In feudal Japan—that is to say, up to about fifty years ago—the business of a merchant was looked upon with the greatest contempt and disdain, much as it was in England three or four hundred years ago. No self-respecting gentleman could fall so low as to engage in trade or commerce. But, on the other hand, the Chinese had been trading with Europeans for a couple of centuries, and they had no doubt been shrewd enough to discover that honesty was the best policy, which

may partly account for their integrity. Moreover, it is highly probable that, when Japan first entered the field of international commerce, her embryo merchants did not always meet with traders of unexceptionable probity, so that they would naturally learn the dishonest tricks of the business before they learnt the honest ones—just as, when adults are trying to pick up a strange language, they generally begin with the swear-words. At any rate, I have very little doubt that the merchants of Japan will very soon conform (if they have not already done so) to the standard of commercial probity which now prevails in the Far East, whatever that standard may be, though I scarcely think any Japanese father would ever sell the smallest of his children to pay even the biggest of his commercial debts. For the Japs are passionately fond of children, and do not make away with their female babies, as the Chinese are believed to do, in order to keep down their superabundant population.

Japan has been often described as the children's paradise.

During the greater part of 1899 we were tolerably free from alarums and excursions, either Russian, French, or Chinese; and I spent a good deal of time at Yokohama, whence I went first to Tokio, and stayed for several days with Sir Ernest Satow, who was at that time British Minister at the Court of the Mikado, and from whom I received the greatest hospitality and kindness. I and my staff were presented to His Majesty, who desired the Master of his Household (Baron Senemayo) to show us round the new palace at Tokio. I had already seen the old palace at Kioto, and greatly admired its quaint and picturesque arrangements and fittings; but when I was told that we were

OLD AND NEW JAPAN.

From a sketch made in the Inland Sea by the author.

to be shown round a quite new palace, built and furnished since Japan had been in close contact with European and American ideas of palaces and "white houses," I trembled at the thought of seeing some abortive and incongruous attempt at blending two totally different styles, such as one sees in Egypt and in some of the palaces on the Bosphorus. I was therefore agreeably surprised to find that there was not the smallest suspicion of any attempt to copy either Europe or America. Everything in the palace, though quite new, was in the purest style of Japanese art—chaste, quiet, and beautiful.

I then had a very pleasant trip up-country with Sir Ernest. First to Nikko, famous for its Shinto temples and ancient groves of stately cryptomerias; then on and up to Lake Chusenji, where my kind host had a comfortable wooden bungalow on the edge of the lake, amidst wild and beautiful scenery, and a handy little skiff, in which he and I rowed double sculls all about the lake for exercise. There were trout in the lake, but I could not catch them. They did not seem to care about my Irish flies, and I could not rise them nor even tempt them with a Devon minnow. The natives caught them, though always at night, and probably with nets. We never saw them fishing in the daytime, but we had the trout for breakfast, and very good they were, though it was stupid of them not to rise to well-tied flies nor to take an attractive minnow. But there's no accounting for taste.

After another short visit to Wei-hai-wei, when I had the pleasure of entertaining Sir Claude MacDonald (Ambassador at Pekin) for a few days on board the *Barfleur*, our Commander-in-Chief rang up the whole China Squadron, with the exception of a few small craft and river gunboats, and took us for a cruise up

the eastern coast of Corea; then on to the coast of Russian Tartary, across to Hakodate, and down the east coast of Japan, calling at many interesting places.

Some of the anchorages on the north-east coast of Corea bear Russian names. Port Lazereff and Korniloff Bay, for instance. It was at the former place that my reputation as a sportsman received a severe shake, in consequence of an event which was known in the squadron as "the Rear-Admiral's deer-drive." There was a peninsula, uninhabited and covered in patches with a scrubby bush. It was about three miles long and a mile and a half broad, and was connected with the mainland by a low, narrow isthmus quite clear of scrub. The peninsula was said to be swarming with deer, and I believe there were a good many on it; but they all stayed there, except one.

My idea was to land a large party of guns and beaters at the end of the peninsula, to form line abreast and drive down towards the isthmus, where I stationed six crack shots with rifles, under the command of Captain Montgomery of the *Bonaventure*, a sportsman and big-game shooter of renown. These were to mow the deer down by hundreds as they fled panic-stricken across the isthmus.

Everything seemed to promise well for a huge battue and venison galore for the whole squadron. Montgomery landed with his party and entrenched across the isthmus, and I landed with the main party and the beaters at the end of the peninsula. I had detachments from nearly all the ships, and mustered about thirty guns and fifty beaters, including six Marine buglers. We then formed line abreast and the drive began. For the first half-mile we kept a fairly good line, and several deer were seen and fired at and missed; but the

ground was far rougher and the bush much thicker than we bargained for. Moreover, the heat was terrific; there was a scorching sun, not a breath of wind, and not a drop of water, that we could find. The ground seemed to get rougher and rougher, the bush thicker and thicker, and the party thirstier and thirstier; until at last the mighty phalanx got thoroughly demoralized and lost all cohesion. Some sat down; some lost their way completely and wandered in every direction except the right one. We never got more than halfway down the length of the peninsula, and the six crack shots waited in vain for the herds of frightened deer that were to be driven past them. Finally most of the party gradually drifted down to the beach and made their way along the shore to the isthmus, where the boats were to meet us. But one section, consisting of a dozen or so, wandered to the off-shore of the peninsula, where they found themselves marooned, and were not rescued until 2 a.m. on the following morning, by Captain Colville in the *Barfleur's* picket-boat. One small deer was shot by Mr. Midshipman Dix of the *Barfleur*. It was a mangy-looking little creature, and covered with ticks. I got politely chaffed about the Rear-Admiral's deer-drive for the rest of the cruise.

We then went on to Korniloff Bay, a little farther to the north, where the *Bonaventure* ran on to an uncharted pinnacle rock. She was ashore for three days, and we had a great job getting her afloat again. During the time she was ashore the weather remained calm, but a few hours after she was afloat it came on to blow and a heavy swell rolled into the bay—a swell which would have made short work of her had she remained on the rock. It was a great piece of luck. After this we had

various fleet exercises, including a night torpedo attack on the squadron by the picket-boats, steam-pinnaces, and our two destroyers. It took place during a violent thunder-storm, and was supposed to have been partially successful.

Having had plenty of work, the squadron then separated for play. Sir Edward Seymour, though not a fisherman himself, was well aware that many of the officers of his squadron (including the Rear-Admiral) were looking forward eagerly to some salmon-fishing in the rivers of Russian Tartary, to the eastward of Vladivostock. So the ships were dispersed along the coast and told off to various beats. This district of Russia's immense dominions is extremely wild and very sparsely populated. It also looks to be barren in the extreme, though perhaps this may not be the case, and that it is merely waiting for scientific development. At any rate, the few natives one meets along the coast do not appear to trouble the salmon, and anyone who likes can go and fish for them. But, like all the uneducated salmon of the Pacific Ocean, they will not rise to a fly. The minnow and the spoon are the only things they will look at; and I caught some with a pike spoon, as big as the bowl of a dessertspoon.

The *Barfleur* was told off to a river that runs into the sea at Olga Bay, about seventy miles to the eastward of Vladivostock. We only had four days' fishing, but we caught fifty-nine salmon, weighing 406 pounds, all with spoon or minnow. We also caught a good many white trout, running up to five and six pounds each; but they also would not rise to a fly.

My appointment as second in command on the China Station was only for two years, and not three, like the Commander-in-Chief; so that I was now drawing near

the end of my tether, and shortly after the above interesting cruise I went down to Hongkong in the *Barfleur* to meet my relief, who turned out to be my old shipmate Jim Bruce.

At Hongkong I met once more Prince Henry of Prussia, in his flagship the *Deutschland*, an antiquated broadside battleship. He was making himself extremely popular, especially with the ladies. He spoke English (his mother's tongue) just like an Englishman, and his frank, sailor-like manners, and apparently sincere friendship and admiration for everything English, won all hearts; and he no doubt played his part well, and probably found out many things that it was useful he and his brother should know. In fact, he continued to play the part of royal spy and false friend up to the eleventh hour, and was in England, as the reader will remember, trying to feel John Bull's gouty pulse and diagnose his numerous constitutional ailments, up to the very last moment before his brother with the swelled head threw down the glove and made his bid for world-power or downfall. It is improbable that it will ever be known what reports Prince Henry and the other spies sent to the Kaiser during the spring and summer of 1914.

I was at Hongkong during the darkest days of the South African War, when the issues seemed to be hanging in the balance; when the British forces were repulsed before Colenso with heavy losses, including eleven guns. It was a time of national anxiety when it was not difficult to see who were one's true friends and who one's false friends and potential enemies. The period I allude to was generally known as " Black Week," and it was on this occasion that the German Club at Hongkong thought it a suitable moment to show their grati-

tude for the hospitality of this British colony, by holding a banquet for German residents, and illuminating with coloured lights the club house, to celebrate a grievous British defeat.

Hongkong is a free port, and a very busy and money-making port. These German merchants had been given equal opportunities of competing in trade with the British merchants who had laboriously established this most important trading-station in Southern China. There were no restrictions placed upon their commercial activities, and they had precisely the same facilities for pushing their German wares as the British merchants had for pushing their British productions, in the Chinese market; and it is scarcely necessary to say that they took full advantage of the opportunities so freely (and perhaps foolishly) granted them, and had become prosperous and rich. And even if Germany did not permit British merchants to establish themselves as rival traders at Kiao-Chow, or at any other German colony, it might at any rate have been expected that the German merchants at Hongkong would have shown some slight respect for the sacred laws of hospitality, even if their views concerning the ordinary courtesies of civil life differed somewhat from those held by other people. Thus, although some of us had for years felt doubts as to the sincerity of German friendship, it came as a shock to the whole British community at Hongkong to learn that the German Club had been illuminated on the night that the news arrived of General Buller's defeat at Colenso. To say that the act was an exhibition of bad taste and bad manners is scarcely strong enough, when we remember the relative positions of hosts and guests in a British colony. It more nearly resembled the act of a savage

and ill-conditioned cur which snaps at the hand that feeds him.*

I left Hongkong for England, via America, with my staff, the week after "Black Week," and we received no reliable news of the South African War until we got to Liverpool. I think it was the most unpleasant journey I ever made, for that reason, and that reason only, as otherwise we were very comfortable. We took passage in the old White Star liner *Doric* for San Francisco, calling at Shanghai, Yokohama, and Honolulu; but we were quarantined at Honolulu, and not allowed to land; which was a great disappointment to me, as I was looking forward with much interest to see what changes had taken place during the forty-three years since last I visited it.

The old *Doric* was not a flyer, and we were impatient to get to San Francisco, as we felt sure we should there get some news of the South African War. But we were disappointed. The American newspapers had nothing in them about the war, and the people we met at the hotels and restaurants did not seem to know that there was any war going on. This was rather mortifying to

* *The Times* of March 25th, 1916, in a leading article says—"We have to protect ourselves from 'peaceful penetration' for all time. There is nothing whatever done by the Germans that throws more light on their character than this process. It is all their own; no people have ever practised it before. It is the art of seeking hospitality in order to betray your unsuspecting host and stab him in the back wnen he is not looking. No baser depth of treachery is known to mankind. And it has been practised deliberately and systematically for many years by the Germans in all countries. They have all been honeycombed by stealthy German intrigue in financial, commercial, social and political life. Its influence is still with us even now, and is being stealthily used under cover in this very matter of trade policy. The war has revealed a state of things that no one would have believed possible; and the nations that have been the victims of it have resolved to have no more of this diabolical treachery."

our national vanity, as we thought the eyes of the whole world were fixed on South Africa. But we thought that, at any rate, when we got farther to the eastward—to Chicago and New York—we should find that the enlightened American people and their newspapers would take some interest in *our* war, even as England had done about the Spanish-American War. Again, however, we were disappointed. The Chicago and New York papers had scarcely anything about South Africa in their columns. There might be scrappy little paragraphs in out-of-the-way corners, as if the matter was of little interest; and, to the best of my recollection, any comments that were made were far from friendly or flattering. "British getting whipped by the Boers." True at the time, no doubt; but as we had not only befriended Uncle Sam at Manila, and had also directly prevented any of the European Powers from taking a hand in support of Spain, I, for one, expected a little more sympathy from him, when we were in trouble. But perhaps I had managed to get hold of the wrong newspapers. In such a spacious country as America there is room for an equally spacious variety of opinions.

I was disappointed with the views in the Rockies, and it was tantalizing to run into one of those wooden snow-tunnels just as you thought you were coming to a fine bit of scenery. One evening just after dinner we stopped at Omaha for a couple of hours, and I was politely requested to grant an interview to the special correspondent of the *Omaha Bee*. It was the only time I have ever been interviewed by an American newspaper reporter, and it was very amusing. He did seem to know that there was war going on in South Africa, but he took little interest in it, and directed most of his

inquiries towards the state of affairs in China and Japan; and I was quite willing to give him my opinions freely—for whatever they might be worth. He was not at all troublesome or unduly inquisitive, but most courteous, polite, and humorous, and not the least like Mr. Jefferson Brick, so unkindly drawn by Dickens. My friend was kind enough to send me a copy of the *Omaha Bee* to New York, with an account of our interview.

We spent nearly a whole day at Chicago, and I am not the least distressed to think that I shall probably never see it again. The day itself was dark, bleak, and dismal, with occasional rain showers; but I cannot imagine that the most brilliant sunshine could make it other than the ghastly, uninteresting, mushroom city which it seemed to me to be.

Then on to Niagara Falls City, where we spent a very busy day; but I am not going to inflict upon the reader a feeble attempt to describe the Falls. He has probably read plenty of descriptions and seen plenty of photographs, and formed his own ideas as to what the Falls are really like. I had done so myself, but discovered that my ideas were all wrong. I could not, however, avoid recalling the story of the unsentimental Irishman who, when asked if he did not think it very marvellous that such an immense body of water—so many thousand tons a minute—should come tumbling down that great height, replied that he did not see anything to hinder it.

The Niagara electric power works were most interesting, and, as I was lucky enough to have a letter of introduction to one of the managers, I and my party were shown over the works and had everything explained to us. Most of the power generated is transmitted to Buffalo, through a small cable, at an enormously high

voltage. In my ignorance I asked the manager why they went to the trouble of transforming the electricity into that immensely high and dangerous voltage, and then bringing it back again to a safe workable voltage when it got to Buffalo. "Well, sir," he said, "if we were to send it to Buffalo at a working voltage, we should want a copper cable three feet in diameter, and I don't think there is copper enough in the United States to make one." What struck me most about the power-station was its spotless cleanliness and the comparative silence of the great turbines, each generating I forget how many horse-power in the form of an electric current; but I hate statistics, and I have no doubt it will be all the same to the reader whether they each generated ten or twenty thousand horse-power. Anyhow, there was bottled lightning enough to have electrocuted all the inhabitants of Niagara Falls City.

Next day on to Albany, and while we were standing on the platform our New York train steamed into the station, with a notice-board on the front of the engine, in very large letters, informing us and everyone whom it might concern that it was "THE fastest train in the world." I was not prepared to admit the claim, as I do not believe it was as fast as some of our English trains, though I am bound to admit that it ran with exceptional smoothness. The Americans are an ambitious people. They like to have the biggest and the best of everything—and quite right too. Why shouldn't they? They cannot have the most ancient family mansions, nor the oldest and most venerable abbeys or cathedrals; but there is no reason why they should not have the newest and the biggest, if they like to build them. And if it pleases them to think that they have the fastest train and the biggest gooseberry, they

do no harm to anyone. No international peacemaker has yet offered a prize for the fastest train, the biggest gooseberry, or the cow with the longest tail, and until such a prize is offered there is no need to argue about it.

I had not been in New York since 1862 (thirty-eight years), and I certainly had no recollection of it. Most towns are growing and changing; but there cannot be many, and those only in the New World, which grow and change as fast as New York. For an American friend tells me, while I am now writing, that if I were to revisit it after the lapse of this further sixteen years, it would seem as strange to me as it did in 1900. In fact, it is now claimed that Greater New York contains a few more inhabitants than Greater London. So all good Americans ought to be quite happy, and not bother about the cow with the longest tail.

We crossed the Atlantic in the *Campania*, and on landing at Liverpool we got the first reliable news of the South African War that we had been able to obtain since leaving Hongkong. It was a very trying journey, and, so far as news was concerned, we might as well have been marooned on a desolate island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. But it was pleasant to learn that John Bull had at last shaken himself awake, and was sending out Lord Roberts and sufficient reinforcements.

CHAPTER XIX

AN AUSTRALIAN NAVY

As I only undertook to write memories of the sea, and as I did not go to sea again after my third visit to China and Japan, I ought—strictly speaking—to stop now. But perhaps the reader will bear with me a little longer, as I was not absolutely idle, though hauled up ashore.

It was a great disappointment to me that I was not employed as a Vice-Admiral; but as I fell foul of the Admiralty about their stupid and ill-considered scheme for the entry and training of naval officers, and as "My Lords" were very angry and had no means of taking reprisals, except by keeping me unemployed, they adopted that course. They had the power to do so, without giving their reasons, so perhaps it was only human nature—of a sort—to use that power. But I shall come to this subject a little later on.

One of the first things I did, on coming ashore, was to take part in a controversy which was attracting a good deal of attention—with regard to whether there should be an Australian Navy, manned and paid for by Australia, or whether it would not be sounder nautical strategy for the Australians to pay a fixed subsidy to the British Admiralty, on the understanding that it should undertake to keep a squadron of a certain size in Australian waters, to defend the shores of that great continent. Personally I never entertained the smallest doubt as to which was the proper, and

indeed the only possible, policy. I felt certain that the Australians would not consent for long to go on paying a subsidy to the British Treasury for the use of British warships to defend their coasts and their inter-colonial trade routes. It might be all very well as a temporary measure, until they could start a navy of their own; but it was absolutely opposed to the oft-expressed ideals and ultimate prosperity of a great self-governing community of pure British stock: for, in the first place, it violated the principle of no taxation without representation, and, secondly, it denied the young men of Australia the opportunity of giving personal service to the land of their birth, except as swamped items in the ocean of the great British Navy. The few nominations for cadetships in our Navy offered by the Admiralty to the young gentlemen of Australia failed entirely to fulfil the aspirations of a community wherein the opinions of the so-called working classes held such dominating political influence.

So I took up my pen and wrote many letters to the Press, and also some magazine articles, strongly advocating the abolition of the subsidy, and the formation, without delay, of an infant navy which the Australians could call their own.

There was considerable opposition amongst some of our naval strategists to the formation of an Australian Navy, and I was much surprised to find that my old friend, Sir John Colomb, M.P., was one of them. For Sir John had been a Marine, and was generally quite sound and far-seeing upon naval subjects; but in this case he founded his faith upon some of the shibboleths of the extreme blue-water school, who said that, as the sea was all one, the Navy must be all one; and, further, that if the Australians were to be encouraged

to have a navy of their own, it would lead to complete separation from the mother-country. In short, that it was a cut-the-painter policy much to be deprecated; though it was not explained why the Australian Commonwealth with a Navy of its own, which for many years must necessarily remain comparatively feeble, should desire to cut the painter and deprive itself of the support of the most powerful Navy in the world, seeing that the island-continent could only be invaded by sea.

The argument that an Australian Navy could not for many years become a source of material strength to the Empire did not appear to me to be a sound one. That it would for some years be a mere baby Navy, as compared with the Navies of possible enemies, was obvious; but it seemed to ignore the fact that we were all babies once, and that it took some years of growth before we became men and women. Moreover, we had before us the extraordinarily rapid growth of the Japanese and German Navies, when once those two countries made up their minds to possess powerful Navies; and it was certain that the baby must be born before it could grow. But the strongest of all the arguments for starting an Australian Navy was the fact that the leading men of Australia—with some few exceptions—wanted it. Nothing less would satisfy their ambitions, and they declined to go on paying the mother-country to defend their shores.

Those who were opposed to offering assistance to the Commonwealth to start a Navy of its own failed to take account of one of the most powerful and universal sentiments in human nature—the charm of possession. "A poor thing, but mine own."

Sir John Colomb called this a silly sentiment. It was a sentiment, certainly; but, as I failed to see anything

silly about it, I hammered away for all I was worth, and have had the satisfaction of seeing the Australians make a start with a Navy of their own. And a very good start, too, just in time to prove its mettle and win laurels in the great war.

The baby Navy, the sea-urchin of the South Pacific, has already shown quite remarkable fighting powers for such a newly born infant, and has established a record which will be an inspiration to Australian seamen for all time.

Undoubtedly the palm should be given to Captain Creswell; for it was mainly due to his clear common sense and indefatigable exertions that all opposition was overcome, and the Australian Navy given a fair start. He was, of course, in the British Navy, and went to Australia (I think) as a Lieutenant, and devoted his talents to the encouragement of a naval spirit in the land of his adoption—a spirit which was decidedly lukewarm at the time of my only visit to Australia, in 1881.

I was in frequent correspondence with Captain Creswell during the controversy about the starting of an Australian Navy. We pulled together; and I trust the reader will forgive me if I quote, in winding up this subject, the following paragraph from the *British Australian* of April 12th, 1906:

"Never has the case for an Australian Navy been put better than in an article contributed to the current number of the *National Review* by Admiral Fitzgerald. One by one he disposes of the old arguments, that consist mainly of ridicule, and shows that the colonial feeling in favour of a locally owned and locally controlled naval contingent is based on the broadest Imperial spirit."

Looking back now upon this controversy, which took place only a few years ago, it seems passing strange that not only some of our own public men—naval strategists and others—should have set their faces against the genesis of an Australian Navy; but that several leading men amongst native-born Australians, including an ex-member of the Commonwealth Parliament, should have opposed the scheme. The only alternative to which was the continued payment of a small money subsidy to the British Treasury, a mere drop in the ocean; which the Australians were being frequently told was very niggardly and not nearly large enough, or at all in proportion to the protection afforded them by their fond mother.

The British people have managed to produce some queer faddists, "freak statesmen" we might perhaps call them without offence. Not so very long ago we had some of these freak statesmen (quite a large and influential party of them, too) who actually wanted to cut the painter with all the colonies, and who said that the sooner we were quit of them, the better it would be for both us and them!

Then a little later in the development of the British Empire, an agitation was set on foot for the abandonment of the Mediterranean by the British Fleet. This particular fad did not have a very long life, though it went quite strong for a short time, and might be properly described as a policy of funk. It was, of course, supported by the "peace-at-any-price" party, though, to the best of my recollection, it was not taken up by either of the two officially recognized political parties. No, not even for temporary electioneering purposes, to catch the votes of a few funkers. It was a little too thin even for unscrupulous political lawyers, who

do not usually stick at trifles. But I well remember that the *Nineteenth Century* published two articles advocating the abandonment of the Mediterranean. One of these was by a Mr. Laird-Clowes, a gentleman who wrote voluminously on naval subjects, and who, though not himself a seaman, was generally recognized as an amateur naval strategist. But, stranger still, the other article was by Colonel Elsdale, R.E., who would no doubt claim to be a professional military strategist.

These two strategists had probably read a few pages of naval history, and made the discovery that the Mediterranean was abandoned by the British Fleet towards the close of the eighteenth century. Therefore why should it not be abandoned again? Had they read a few pages farther, they would have discovered that a British Fleet sailed up the Mediterranean again, shortly after the Battle of Cape St. Vincent, and that Nelson fought the Battle of the Nile in August, 1798.

But the second abandonment of the Mediterranean was to be complete and final. Gibraltar was to be given to Spain, Egypt to France, and Malta to the Pope.

Poor Pope!

CHAPTER XX

THE NEW SCHEME OF ENTRY

On Christmas Day, 1902, the Navy received a Christmas-box from the Admiralty, in the shape of a new scheme for the entry and training of naval officers. It was known as the Selborne-Fisher Scheme, though it was entirely the work of Vice-Admiral Sir John Fisher, who came home from the Mediterranean with the scheme in his pocket, took his seat at the Admiralty as *Second* Sea Lord, and—largely assisted by *The Times* newspaper—carried the scheme into law, in spite of all opposition. This was a really wonderful coup on the part of the author of the scheme.

Lord Selborne was merely a successful politician, who knew no more about the Navy than thousands of other landsmen; but, in accordance with our general (though not invariable) policy of placing the management of the British Navy in the hands of men who know nothing about it, he found himself in the proud position of First Lord of the Admiralty. A young and energetic politician, full of the best intentions, he no doubt cherished the ambition of handing down his name to posterity as a great naval reformer; which ambition, if it had been fulfilled, would have rivalled the lustre which shines around the memory of the distinguished lawyer, his father, who founded the title. As matters turned out, however, he will only be remembered as the figure-head of a great naval blunder; for the Selborne-

Fisher Scheme for the entry and training of naval officers has already been proved to be quite unworkable in its original form, and has been altered and patched and twisted about beyond all recognition, and will probably have to undergo a good many more repairs, before it is freed from the numerous fundamental errors which it originally contained.

The scheme was launched with a great flourish of trumpets, a quite dramatic prologue, and advertising puffs in the newspapers, as seductive and as frothy as if it had been a brand-new soap.

In his original memorandum, which occupied four and a half columns of *The Times*, Lord Selborne said:

"These changes are far-reaching and in some respects sweeping, but the scheme which necessitates them is framed in pursuance of a definite policy, is planned on clear lines, as designed to deal with the problem as a whole, and is throughout conceived in a spirit of veneration for all that is best and highest in the traditions of the Service."

The scheme was no doubt far-reaching and sweeping, but, so far from showing veneration for the traditions of the Service, it violated many of these in the most barefaced manner.

If we drop for the moment the question of whether the scheme was intrinsically good or bad, it is manifestly absurd to say that "far-reaching" and "sweeping" changes in the regulations for entering and training the future officers of the Navy could at the same time show veneration for the traditions of the Service. Exactly the opposite was the case.

For instance, the Royal Marines have for more than a century been considered as a branch, and a very important branch, of the Navy; yet this loyal and long-

suffering corps was coolly told that they were no longer to have their own officers, but that the new Jack-of-all-trades prodigy, who was to be produced by the new scheme, the man who was to be one-third seaman, one-third engineer, and one-third soldier, was to be lent to the corps for a year or two, to take a turn at soldiering, and then go back to being a seaman or an engineer, while another seaman or engineer took his place, and so on. This game of general-post was called interchangeability—a fine long word—and it was supposed to be one of the cleverest and most far-sighted provisions of the Selborne-Fisher Scheme, as it would enable everybody to do everybody else's work. And this at a time when specialization, in all professions, was found to be necessary in order to insure the highest efficiency!

"The Marines were heart-broken," as Lord Goschen (a former First Lord) declared in the House of Lords. And well they might be; for it was probably the most gratuitous and undeserved insult that has ever been offered to a highly disciplined and eminently efficient body of troops, even by distinguished reformers. Moreover, the plan was seen to be impossible, not to say absurd, and the lists were once more opened for the direct entry of Marine officers, to be trained at their own depot, in accordance with the time-honoured and illustrious traditions of the corps.

This was amongst the first of the fundamental alterations which were found to be necessary in the scheme which had been "framed in pursuance of a definite policy, planned on clear lines," and which was "conceived in a spirit of veneration for all that is best and highest in the traditions of the Service." Especially the traditions of the Royal Marine branch of the Service.

It does seem almost incredible that even the most enthusiastic reformers should have been so blind, or so ignorant of human nature and of that most commanding sentiment we call *esprit de corps*, as to imagine that any body of troops could maintain its discipline without its own officers.

As the direct re-entry of Marine officers disposed of one of the most glaring of the absurdities of the Selborne-Fisher Scheme, interest became concentrated upon the question of whether there was or was not to be a complete amalgamation of the Executives and the Engineers, or whether they were to branch off at the age of nineteen or twenty and remain separate for the rest of their careers. The common entry, which Lord Selborne claimed to be the most fascinating and peace-making feature of the scheme, proved to be one of the greatest stumbling-blocks, and the feature most likely to give rise to heart-burning and jealousy. For whereas one of the principal fuglemen and advertisers of the scheme (my old friend J. R. Thursfield, leader-writer and naval critic for *The Times*) drew a charming and quite dramatic picture of the Chief Engineer rushing up the engine-room ladder just in the nick of time to take command of the fleet and win another Battle of Trafalgar, Lord Selborne himself remained in a cloud of doubt as to whether Nelson would or would not be found in the engine-room at the last minute. For when an anxious father wrote to him to ask whether, if his son took to the engineer line, he would be able to rise to the command of a ship or squadron, he received the following reply, which was also published in *The Times* of January 12th, 1903—just eighteen days after the launch of the scheme.

"Dear Mr. ——,

"In reply to the inquiries you have made, I have to say that the words in my memorandum, to the effect that the division of the Sub-Lieutenants into the three branches—Executive, Engineer, and Royal Marine—shall be definite and final, mean exactly what they say as regards the intention of the present Board. The point could not be left doubtful. Either there will be interchangeability hereafter or there will not. Either an engineer officer, for instance, will be able to rise to the command of a ship or squadron, or he will not."

Even if the inquiring father was as ignorant of naval matters as Lord Selborne himself, it is highly probable that he could have informed his lordship that his son either would or would not be able to rise to the command of a ship or squadron; and when he was informed in the very same letter that the point could not be left doubtful, and that the words in the original memorandum "mean exactly what they say," he must have had a shrewd suspicion that Lord Selborne was chaffing him, or that he was reading "Alice in Wonderland."

Yet the letter was not published in *Punch*, but in *The Times*.

Further muddling and uncertainty then arose around the question of whether the parents or guardians of the little boys who were to be given nominations would promise for them that, when they arrived at years of discretion, they would go into whichever of the three lines was most in need of recruits.

At first it was announced that, in the distribution of nominations by the Admiralty, "preference would be given" to those who promised for general service. Then, a little later on, it was given out that *only* those who promised for general service would be given nominations.

In his original memorandum Lord Selborne stated that, "although it is proposed to make the division into the various branches definite and final, every endeavour will be made to provide those who enter the Engineer branch with opportunities equal to those of the Executive branch, including the same opportunity of rising to Flag rank."

The words "every endeavour" sounded strange to naval ears, which are more accustomed to receive definite orders than to be blarneyed with "every endeavours." But no doubt it was this clause in the memorandum that inspired my friend Mr. Thursfield to draw that fascinating and dramatic picture of Nelson skipping up the engine-room ladder, just in time to take command of the fleet and win a great naval battle.

The original memorandum stated that—

"When the young officers, aged nineteen to twenty, have passed out of the college at Portsmouth, and have gained their classification in the different subjects of the examination, their careers for the first time will begin to diverge, and they will be posted to the Executive or to the Engineer branch of the Navy, or to the Royal Marines. As far as possible each officer will be allowed to choose which branch he will join, but this must be subject to the proviso that all branches are satisfactorily filled."

The memorandum then went on to say that no Sub-Lieutenant would "be compelled to join a branch for which he did not enter as a boy when applying for a nomination"; but, as no nominations were to be given to any boys whose parents or guardians did not enter them for general service, the above promise could only be regarded as another exhibition of Lord Selborne's humour.

It was obvious that the framers of the famous memorandum foresaw that the great majority of the Sub-Lieutenants would try to get posted to the Executive branch. A promise of extra pay was therefore offered as a bribe to those who volunteered to be Engineers; and this, backed by the "every endeavour" clause, was expected to produce enough volunteers for that branch. But in case it did not prove to be a sufficient inducement, the Admiralty reserved to themselves the power (as if anyone could dispute their power!) of seeing that all three branches were furnished with "a due proportion of the most capable officers."

One of the critics of the scheme then pointed out that if all the Sub-Lieutenants, or even a majority, who got first-class certificates at the final examination, selected the Executive branch—an event which seemed at least possible, if not probable—the Admiralty would find themselves in the position of being obliged to drive some of these "most capable officers" into the Engineers or the Marines, against their will, whilst some of the duffers who got second or third class certificates would be drafted into the popular branch. For no one who knows anything about the Navy can doubt for a moment that nine out of ten young men who had selected the sea-service for a career would rather keep watch on the bridge than in the engine-room—even with the chance of scrambling up the iron ladder at the last minute to take command of the fleet.

The above is only one specimen of the numerous muddles and inconsistencies with which the famous scheme abounded, sinning as it did against light, against all experience, and against "veneration for all that is best and highest in the traditions of the Service"—to use Lord Selborne's own words.

The scheme was said to be democratic and in accordance with the Liberal spirit of the age. It was, however, exactly the contrary, as it was a return to pure patronage, undiluted by any competitive examination. The reduction of the age from fourteen and a half—fifteen and a half to twelve—thirteen rendered a competitive examination impracticable: everybody was agreed on this point. But there was no good reason for altering the age. Lord Selborne, indeed, claimed that twelve to thirteen was the age at which boys usually left their private schools; but he was promptly contradicted by a committee of head-masters of these schools, who said it was not, but that, on the contrary, it was a year or two too young, and that it upset all their arrangements. Another blunder.

There can be no doubt that one of the principal—though unavowed—reasons for the great amalgamation scheme was the desire to put a stop to an agitation which had been going on for some years amongst a small, noisy, discontented section of the naval Engineers, who wanted executive rank, titles, the curl on the sleeve, and the "privilege" of punishing their own men, without bringing them before the Captain or Commander. This agitation was backed up, if not originated, by the "trade" on shore—mainly by the Society of North-East Coast Engineers, men who had nothing whatever to do with the Royal Navy, but who thought they saw a chance of aggrandizing the importance of their own business by stirring up discontent amongst the junior Engineer officers. The agitators threatened to boycott the Navy and stop the entry of Engineers, unless the Admiralty complied with their demands. The new scheme therefore was meant to be a clever counter-stroke aimed at the "trade." In other words, it was

intended to "dish" the Engineers, and at the same time as a by-product, to "dish" the Marines. Nobody could understand why the most perfectly disciplined, the most loyal, and, without exaggeration, the most ubiquitous and most useful corps in the service of the Crown were to be dished. Happily for the Country and for the Navy, that part of the scheme completely failed; but, on the other hand, the Engineers have been dished, most effectually dished: for the whole of that social class which formerly supplied the Navy with Engineers, and, be it noted, the best Engineers in the world, is now absolutely debarred from getting into the Navy at all! The expense of Osborne and Dartmouth is too great for them. So the upshot of it all is that the boycotters and agitators have been hoist with their own petard.

So far from the new scheme being in accordance with the spirit of the age, it is a retrograde step. So far from spreading the net wider, in order to catch latent talent in a less restricted social class, we have returned to undiluted patronage and money.

It would be mere affectation to pretend that our incomparable naval Engineers were recruited from the same social class as the Executives. They were not; and no one who knows anything about the Navy could suggest that they were. Oh, but we intend to abolish classes altogether, say the new-schemers. Nonsense! You might just as well start a scheme to abolish the tides or the change of the seasons.

The backers of the Selborne-Fisher Scheme claimed that the United States had already adopted a scheme for amalgamating their Executives and Engineers, and had found it a great success. This was an uncommonly bad shot on the part of the "reformers."

The measure of the success may be judged by the following, which appeared in the *Army and Navy Register*, Washington, U.S.A.:

"British Adoption of Our Mistake" (in large headlines). "We can afford to read, with a complacency born of bitter experience, the discussion now going on in British Service papers, on the proposition to establish in the English Navy a system of all-round education which shall make the naval officer of the future an 'executive engineer.' In the heyday of our scheme of line and engineer amalgamation we used to call that officer a 'fighting engineer.' The difference in title, however, is a small matter. The effect is the same whether the adjective is administrative or belligerent in its quality, and probably, if the British plan is realized, there will some day be the same situation in that service as to-day offers its growing menace to ours."

And then, after describing our proposed method of training under the new scheme, the *Army and Navy Register* continues:

"It seems strange to talk of specializing when an officer must be capable of discharging the multifarious duties, and imparting a knowledge of them to others, such as is outlined by the projectors of this scheme. There is no speciality about it. It is quite the contrary, and the British will find that no man can be trained to thoroughness in such variety of distinctly important tasks. The idea is an alluring one, that of giving a naval officer a value to his services not confined to one branch; but the best results must continue to be achieved by those whose business it has been to give thought and study and research along definite and prescribed lines. . . . The plan of the British is impractical, just as our plan has been found impractical. . . . The attractive feature of the plan is that engineer officers will have executive rank. . . . The British Service is just about taking the step which this country now realizes, after several years' trial, to have been a wellnigh fatal mistake."

No doubt the Yankees will muddle through somehow, and provide themselves with competent Engineers and competent Executives; *but they will not be the same individuals.*

We also shall no doubt muddle through, when the new scheme has been finally altered out of all recognition; but it would have saved a good deal of trouble and much blundering if our Admiralty had not been too proud to find out what public opinion in the United States thought of the Jack-of-all-trades business, before committing this country to such a wild experiment.

When it became obvious the scheme was not working quite so smoothly as its authors expected, the Admiralty appointed a committee, presided over by a distinguished Admiral, to inquire into the subject. The committee was not instructed to report whether the scheme was fundamentally good, bad, or indifferent, but rather to draw a red-herring across the scent, cover up the track of some of the worst blunders, and, in short, to try and make the best of a bad job.

And now I think I have said enough about the Selborne-Fisher Scheme for the entry and training of naval officers. No doubt the British Navy of the future will be—somehow—provided with first-rate Captains and first-rate Chief-Engineers. The post of one will be on the bridge, the post of the other will be in the engine-room; and the two " first-rates " will not be combined in the same man.

It will certainly require skilful and very highly trained Engineers to manage the machinery of our future warships, and it will not be of very much consequence what we call them, so long as they know their job and stick to it, devoting the whole of their time and all their natural resources towards keeping their professional

knowledge abreast of all the latest developments of engineering science; bearing in mind that these are becoming rapidly more and more complex day by day, for the inventive fiend never sleeps.

If the Engineers object to be called "Engineers," there seems to be no sufficient reason why they should not be called "Bishops" and "Archbishops," or even "Cardinals," as none of these latter go to sea in our ships; but to call them "Captains" and "Admirals," will be apt to lead to confusion. And it is regrettable that any body of men should be ashamed of the proper titles attached to their profession.

I fought tooth and nail against the Selborne-Fisher Scheme, as I had an absolute right to do whilst on half-pay. I wrote many letters to the Press and several articles in the popular magazines, exposing its inconsistencies and its distinctly retrograde tendency; and for my temerity in criticizing the Admiralty I was made to pay dearly, for out of my ten years on the active Flag list of the Navy I was only employed for two years, and that in a subordinate position, as second in command of the China Station; and I passed right through the Vice-Admiral's list without hoisting my flag.

It is no mere fancy of mine that I was deliberately punished by the Admiralty for criticizing their pet scheme; for when I had been passed over several times as a Vice-Admiral, and appointments, to which I had a better claim, were given to my juniors, my old friend Lord Clanwilliam—who was then an Admiral of the Fleet—went to the Admiralty to try and find out why I was being thus treated. But he could get no change out of them as he expressed it, except that they possessed the right of appointing whom they thought proper, without giving their reasons, an indisputable

fact which nobody would question. My dear old chief was, however, told at the same time, by one of the Secretaries, that the First Lord and First Sea Lord had together "sworn a solemn oath" that I should never be employed again, so long as they remained in power, as I had dared to criticize their scheme.

Lord Clanwilliam told me the above himself, and I also have it in his own handwriting, in a letter which he wrote me immediately after his visit to the Admiralty —a visit which, I need scarcely say, he paid on his own initiative, and without telling me of his intention. He was greatly annoyed; but "they have the power," said he, "and they intend to use it. I can do nothing more in the matter; though, of course, you were entirely within your rights in criticizing the scheme, and you merely expressed what most of us think on the subject."

I have had the misfortune to be "agin the Guvernment" on two occasions. The other was when I took part in the agitation that led directly to the Naval Defence Act of 1889—an Act already alluded to in Chapter XII., and one which, I do not doubt, the historian of the future will duly record as a timely act of self-defence, which saved the British Empire ten years later. And he will also have to record how a Radical Government did their level best to wreck it, by "dropping Dreadnoughts," to please Germany, only three or four years before the outbreak of the great war—at a time when everyone, save fools, traitors, and place-hunting politicians, foresaw that the war was coming.

On both the above occasions I was punished professionally for doing what I had a perfect right to do, and what I believed it to be my duty to do, in the best interests of my country; and, moreover, I am absolutely un-

repentant, and I would act in precisely the same way again, even if I could foresee the consequences.

We are told that comparisons are odious, yet it is difficult to avoid comparing one's own case with that of someone else, who seemed to be in the same boat, and who received different treatment.

For many years I have watched with delight and admiration the career of my old friend Charlie Beresford, and I could not help comparing his treatment with my own. He also has been "agin the Guverment" on several occasions, especially in the case of the Naval Defence Act agitation; and it always seemed to me that he was much more militant and used much stronger language in his criticisms of the Admiralty than I ever used. Yet he went unscathed. The reputation he had made for himself in the Navy, his many gallant and dashing exploits, both by land and sea, his immense and well-deserved popularity, and last—though perhaps not least—his political influence, caused the Admiralty to be afraid of him. They simply daren't touch him, and he could just say whatever he liked about the Admiralty or the Government of the day. He was absolutely fearless, though not always diplomatically discreet; but by speaking out boldly, as he did on many notable occasions, both in the House of Commons and on public platforms, he rendered to his country more substantial and important services than all the silver-tongued diplomatists, or the eloquent lawyers, who could easily prove that two Dreadnoughts added to two more Dreadnoughts made six Dreadnoughts.

Alas! I had no political influence, nor had I had the luck to see any real war service; so the Admiralty had no reason to be afraid of me—and they were not.

CHAPTER XXI

COMMITTEES AND MILAN EXHIBITION

I HAVE already recorded that I did not go to sea again after coming on shore in February, 1900; but before I offended the Admiralty by criticizing their new scheme for the entry and training of officers, they employed me on two committees. The first was appointed to inquire into the cause of the loss of the *Cobra*, a torpedo-boat-destroyer, which broke in half and sank in the North Sea, drowning the greater part of her crew.

The *Cobra* was a new thirty-knot destroyer, built on the Tyne. She was not regularly in commission, but was on her passage round from the contractors to Chatham Dockyard, in charge of a navigating crew, to be completed. Twelve men got into the dinghy and were picked up.

The committee originally consisted of Admiral Rawson (President), Dr. Inglis (ship-builder), Mr. A. Denny (ship-builder), Professor Biles, of Glasgow University, and Mr. H. E. Deadman (naval constructor of the Admiralty). Shortly after the formation of the committee, Rawson was appointed to the command of the Australian Station, and I took his place. My colleagues were all experts at ship-building. I was only a sailor, but I found the work extremely interesting, although I was not able to understand all the scientific calculations and elaborate experiments with another destroyer, which were deemed necessary, in order to arrive at a

conclusion as to the cause of the accident; though I do not doubt that some useful information was obtained with regard to the stresses and strains to which vessels of great proportional length—to their beam and depth—are subjected in a seaway.

The destroyers were a novelty in naval architecture; and in their laudable efforts to obtain very high speed with vessels of light scantling and shallow draught, the builders were running it a little too fine. And when you are getting near the border-line of structural strength nothing but good seamanship and very careful handling can avoid grave risk of disaster, when such fragile vessels get into a gale of wind. But the evidence of the survivors went to show that careful handling was entirely lacking in the case of the *Cobra*, though apparently through no failure in seamanship on the part of the officer commanding. This may sound contradictory, but it is not so; for the fact of the matter was, that all hands were seasick, the stokers were unable to keep steam, the vessel fell off into the trough of the sea, and while in that position she was struck by a sea and broke in half.

I had the misfortune to differ with all my colleagues as to the cause of the disaster. They found that she ought not to have broken in half; and I agreed, so far as the "ought not" went; but when they went on to find that she was not lost through stress of weather and abnormal lightness of structure, I found myself unable to agree, as the only alternative was that she struck something hard, or that something hard struck her; but I was unable to find that anything harder than a sea struck her while she was in an unmanageable condition, broadside on, wallowing in the trough of the sea.

The term "struck by a sea" is a common one in nautical parlance, though it is probable that only sailors really know what it means. A landsman would say, "Surely, during a gale of wind, you are struck by a sea three or four times every minute." Quite true in one sense; but the point is that, in a gale of wind lasting through several days, you may only be hit by one big sea, and perhaps not even by one if you are lucky. I don't know how to account for the one big sea, except by supposing that by some freak of Nature two seas get rolled into one. Anyhow, every now and then you see a great white-headed thing, many feet higher than its brethren, come bowling along towards the ship. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred it misses you; but if it hits you it gives you something to remember. So I came to the conclusion that the *Cobra* was not struck by anything harder than a sea; but that was a big one, and that was enough. She offered a fine broadside-on target, and it must have caught her nearly amidships.

The other committee which I took part in was presided over by Lord Camperdown, a good old nautical name. It was called upon to report what steps could be taken to cut the Germans out of the blue ribbon of the Atlantic, which they held for six years. The above was not the exact wording of our instructions, though that was, in plain language, the object with which the committee had to deal.

The Germans had built several Atlantic greyhounds which could make the passage from England or France to New York at a speed of about twenty-three knots, whereas the fastest English or French ships were not good for more than about twenty-one knots. The Germans therefore took the cream of the first-class

passenger traffic; and when this had been going on for six years, England began to wake up and look round. It was felt to be a reproach to the so-called Mistress of the Seas that an upstart nautical Power like Germany should beat her at her own game. There was no doubt a good deal of sentiment about it; but as our great Transatlantic steamship companies run their ships for profit, not for sentiment, and as their calculations showed them the great expense which would be involved in building and running ships fast enough to beat the heavily subsidized German ships, they came to the conclusion it would not pay them to do so unless they also were subsidized. It was to report upon this subject that Lord Camperdown's committee was appointed.

We had a representative from the Treasury and one from the Post-Office, and my old friend Professor Biles represented Naval Architecture. I was no doubt put on the committee to represent the naval interest, with the view that any ships that might be built, should be suitable for use as auxiliary cruisers in time of war.

We talked a good deal, and examined a large number of witnesses, including Lord Inverclyde, the Chairman of the Cunard Line; and the upshot of it all was the building of the two quadruple-screw turbine liners *Mauretania* and *Lusitania*, with a sea-speed of twenty-five knots, thus winning back from the Germans the blue ribbon of the Atlantic. The Treasury advanced money to the Cunard Company to help them to build the two ships, and also guaranteed a subsidy; but I do not think details would interest the general reader, and—as all the world knows—the *Lusitania* is now at the bottom of the sea.

In March, 1905, I passed on to the retired list of the

Navy as a full-Admiral, aged sixty-four. I could have remained on the active list for another year, had I wished to do so, as the age for compulsory retirement is sixty-five; but, as there was no prospect of further employment, I did not think the honour and glory of remaining on the active list was worth the difference between half-pay and retired pay; so I retired voluntarily, after fifty-one years' service, and—like the prisoner of Chillon —" regained my freedom with a sigh."

In September, 1906, I had a very interesting trip to Milan. It was the year of the Milan Exhibition, and I was asked to serve on the international jury, for the award of prizes to the exhibiters in the naval section; and, as my expenses were to be paid, I gladly accepted the invitation.

I expected it would be hot at Milan in September, and so it was; but it was cooler than London, for when I left Victoria Station at 10 a.m. on September 1st the thermometer stood at 91° in the shade, and when I got to Milan, on the afternoon of the following day, it was only 90°. But it stayed at that during the fortnight I was there.

This was my third visit to Milan, but I saw more of it on this occasion than I did on either of my preceding visits; and the interior of that wondrous Duomo seems to get more and more magnificent and impressive every time one passes from the glaring sunlight into its cool and solemn shades. I never cared much for the exterior. It looks too much like a children's Christmas-cake, with sugar ornaments on the top of it. And although it may be worth while going on to the roof, for the sake of seeing Napoleon amongst the Saints, neither he nor his comrades look impressive from the street. But the interior is, to my mind, the finest in Europe, Cologne

second, St. Peter's nowhere. I dare say my taste is not orthodox, but we are all entitled to our own opinions.

The Milan Exhibition of 1906 was the most complete and comprehensive, and, I may add, the most attractive, exhibition it has ever been my luck to see; and I saw it all for nothing. The duties of the jury were not too onerous, and we had plenty of time to see other sections besides our own. My brother-jurymen were all very friendly and very pleasant. It was arranged and agreed to by all the nationalities—even including the Germans —that all our discussions were to be carried on in French; and, if this had been done, I might perhaps have understood a little of the proceedings. But as the conversations, after the first five minutes, invariably lapsed into Italian, I was left very much in the dark. This, however, was not of much consequence, as, when it came to assessing the prizes, I was able to give my opinion quite unbiassed by the opinions of the other "nautical experts."

In preparation for the coming era of universal and everlasting peace, there was, of course, a great show of war material: ship models, guns, projectiles, armour, machine-guns, etc.; and it was upon this section that I was employed. They kindly elected me vice-president of our sectional jury, the president being, very properly, an Italian—Admiral de Luca, Royal Italian Navy.

On referring to my report, I see that "Great Britain was not widely represented in the above-named group, many leading British firms being entirely absent." Vickers, Sons, and Maxim, however, made a fairly good show; but by far the most extensive exhibit of warlike appliances was made by the famous Krupp firm, which was only to be expected.

A rather amusing incident occurred while we were inspecting machine-guns mounted on field-carriages. We first inspected a beautifully finished automatic Krupp gun, minutely examining all the details. Then one of the jurymen said he would like to see the gun dismounted. The Germans were evidently prepared for this request. Out stepped four stalwart, well-drilled soldiers in mufti and stood beside the gun. The jurymen pulled out their watches; the order was given to dismount the gun, which was done very smartly, everything going like clockwork, with thorough German-like order and precision. It was obvious that this was not the first time those four soldiers had dismounted and remounted that gun.

The jury then turned to the British stand, close by, and inspected an equally beautiful and well-finished Vickers-Maxim automatic machine-gun, examining all the details and making their notes. The guns could not—under the circumstances—be fired, but there did not appear to be much difference in the man-slaying power of the two guns, should they happen to catch a body of men within range in the open. I trembled, however, for a British defeat, should the jury ask to see the Vickers-Maxim gun dismounted and remounted again; for I felt sure there would not be four thoroughly drilled British soldiers ready to step out and do the job in as good time as the Germans did theirs. But I felt slightly reassured when I recognized in the Vickers foreman an ex-petty-officer of the Royal Navy. I could have guessed his genus half a mile off, long before I saw the tattoo marks; and when I saw the merry twinkle in his eye (he had been watching the German performance), I hoped he might have something up his sleeve. And he had.

Sure enough, the jury expressed the wish to see the Vickers gun dismounted and remounted again.

The ex-P.O. turned to his assistant: " 'Ere, Bill," says he, " the gents want to see the gun dismounted. Do you think we can do it ?" Bill expressed the opinion that he thought they could, and that, anyhow, they would try. Bill also had tattoo marks, and an ill-suppressed smile on his face. " 'Ere, Chawley, you come and lend Bill and me a 'and here to dismount this 'ere gun. Now, gents, we're ready." The jury pulled out their watches and I rapped out, " Dismount the gun !" in my best quarter-deck voice of command.

If the German performance went like clockwork, the British one went like magic. The gun was dismounted and remounted again in little more than half the time taken by the four soldiers. It was obvious to me that the ex-P.O. and Bill and Charley must have been members of a field-gun's crew in the Royal Navy before they transferred their talents to the firm of Vickers-Maxim. They had not forgotten their lessons; and they were good actors, too.

The jury laughed heartily, and gave Vickers-Maxim a " Grand Prix."

CHAPTER XXII

NATIONAL SERVICE AND GERMAN INTRIGUE

THE only other business of a public nature that I have taken part in since my retirement has been the work of the National Service League; and, although I was not one of the original members, I joined it shortly after it was started, and worked steadily with voice and pen to try and convince my countrymen of the necessity for a real—and not a bogus—national army, up to the outbreak of the war; when we turned all our machinery and our energies on to assist the Government in beating up recruits on the voluntary system. For although we never believed in either the justice or the efficiency of that system, Lord Roberts—our President—decided that it was the most patriotic course to take under the circumstances, and I have no doubt he was right.

Looking back now at the opposition we had to encounter during our efforts to convince our countrymen of the wisdom of preparing for a war which all save knaves and fools saw to be inevitable, one stands aghast at the folly and utter absence of logic in the arguments used by the political lawyers and other conceited and ignorant people who thought themselves to be better judges of the military requirements of the nation than the great soldier-statesman, who not only implored the country to prepare, but pointed out the only way in which it could prepare for the crash which he so clearly foresaw was coming.

Wiseacres tell us not to cry over spilt milk, as it is useless to do so. It is also "useless"—in the strict sense of the word—for widows to weep for their husbands, or mothers for their sons; but if the country realizes and takes to heart the undeniable fact that there would be fewer widows and fewer bereaved mothers if Lord Roberts's advice had been taken in time, it may help to impart wisdom to the coming generation, which will have the making of our future laws; and although lawyers may be very clever at interpreting laws, they seem to be uncommonly stupid about making them. Unless, indeed, they purposely make them ambiguous, so as to prepare remunerative work for themselves in interpreting them. But this is a digression. It is difficult, however, to keep one's hands off those nimble tricksters who, having seized the reins of government, preferred the interests of their party to the safety of their country, and rushed us unprepared into the greatest war the world has ever seen.

One of the most astonishing features of the present situation (May, 1916) is the unblushing effrontery of these same incompetent politicians, who are still trying to brazen out the appalling blunders for which the country is now paying so dearly in blood and treasure, and to which they have now added the Irish Rebellion, brought about by a mixture of equal parts of blindness and cowardice.

The culmination of effrontery is reached when these same blunderers grandiloquently announce that to turn them out of office would amount to a national disaster! For although it is a regrettable fact that the wily Radicals succeeded in bamboozling a few amiable and unsuspecting Conservatives to walk into their parlour and share the blame for any future blunders they might

commit, they had no intention of altering their policy or changing the leader who still holds the helm and steers the ship. But I find I am lapsing into politics, so I must pull up short, as my only remaining task now is to note and record the nature of the opposition which the National Service League had to encounter in its efforts to awaken the country, with the hope that by so doing the folly of this opposition may be disclosed, for the enlightenment of those amiable dreamers who are already telling us that this is going to be the last war. Of course it is going to be the last war—until the next one.

It is very easy to be wise after the event; but Lord Roberts and the National Service League can claim to have been wise before the event, and they steadfastly warned the country, for several years, that war with Germany was inevitable, and that Germany would choose her own time and strike when she was ready. War with Germany became inevitable upon the date when the first German Navy Law was published, in 1900. If, indeed, it had not become inevitable three years earlier, when the famous Kruger telegram was ostentatiously launched as a direct insult and a challenge to England.

The proposals of the National Service League are common knowledge. They have been so clearly and so forcibly put before the country in the literature of the League, and in the lucid and ever-memorable speeches of our gallant and lamented President, that I need not weary the reader by restating them here. It is enough to say that we founded our arguments on the proposition that, in a free, self-governing country, every sound man of military age ought to be, not only willing, but *ready*, to fight for his country; and, further,

that he could not be ready—even if willing—unless he had been previously trained.

The whole of Lord Roberts's arguments were founded upon that simple proposition.

The proposition is not new. The ancient Greeks had national service, though, of course, they were heathens; and it might be argued—in fact, it has been argued—that it is unchristian to fight for your country, if you happen to have a conscience which instructs you that you have a God-given right to enjoy all the advantages of living in a free country, but that you must not raise your hand to defend that freedom. A convenient creed for selfish shirkers.

The opponents of national service were fond of arguing that it would be " un-English " to cause young Englishmen to do their duty if they preferred to shirk it. But this was historically false, as compulsory service is as old as the monarchy; and, moreover, Englishmen had already taken the principle of national service across the Atlantic more than one hundred and fifty years ago, as may be seen from the following extract from the " Militia Law of Massachusetts Bay," passed in 1758. And as this was before the American Revolution, we may presume that the inhabitants of the colony of Massachusetts Bay were English, and English of a sturdy type.

" As it is the essential property of a free Government to depend on no other soldiery but its own citizens for its defence, so in all such free governments every freeman and every freeholder should be a soldier. A freeman that is no soldier does as much as in him lies that he should be no longer free. . . . 'Tis base not to be allowed to bear arms in his own and his country's defence. 'Tis perfidy and treachery in a free citizen not to be willing to bear arms. But to affect to bear

arms, and not to know or learn the use of them, is worse than slavishness or treachery; it is cruelty with aggravation, to mock his country in its distress."

We are not told whether there were any conscientious objectors in the colony of Massachusetts Bay in 1758. But if there were, they probably got short shrift from the elders who managed public affairs; for these early settlers were not the sort of men to stand any effeminate hypocrisy amongst their community. They had consciences themselves, no doubt, but they did not use them as a cloak for cowardice.

I wonder what Miles Standish would have said to a young man who told him that he had a conscientious objection to take up arms in defence of the colony. Or what Priscilla would have said to John Alden, if he had told her that, although he loved her dearly, he had a conscientious objection to fight against the Indians in defence of her honour and her life. Yet these Indians were not one bit more ruthless nor more cruel than the cultivated Germans of the twentieth century, whom our conscientious young men decline to fight.

Amongst the objections which were raised by those who opposed Lord Roberts and the N.S.L., I will give a few extracts from a manifesto which was distributed broadcast, in the shape of a leaflet, and signed by forty-two members of the House of Commons. It was headed, "Working Class Leaders and Compulsory Military Training," and it said:

"At a time when the workers in other countries" (query: which other countries?) "are crying out against the evils of conscription, a persistent attempt is being made to introduce it into this country in the form of compulsory military training. It is because this agitation is backed by a large array of men and women of

the *rich* (my italics) classes, and lavishly supplied with money, that we think it desirable to warn the working classes of this well-organized conspiracy against their liberties." (The conspiracy was an unsuccessful attempt to prepare the country for the great war which Lord Roberts and the N.S.L. clearly foresaw.) . . . "We regard compulsion in any form as bad" (though apparently not the compulsory taxing of the *rich* classes to provide compulsory education, *free*, to the children of the working classes). . . . "Trade-unionists, co-operators, and other organized workmen, have been untouched by this mischievous propaganda of militarism. They stand resolutely by the voluntary system as the only one which the workers will tolerate" (as it is the only one which enables them to shirk all duty to the State, which protects them and their wives and children from foreign aggression). "The Government which tried to abolish it would have short shrift at their hands. . . . Holding these views strongly, we venture to urge upon all classes the importance of a strenuous resistance to the demands which are made for compulsory military training by Lord Roberts and the National Service League, of which he is the head."

This statesmanlike and patriotic manifesto was issued to the British public in February, 1911, when Germany was strenuously making large additions to her Navy, with feverish haste, accompanied by clumsy attempts to preserve secrecy; and was also adding greatly to her already immense and highly organized army.

Amongst the forty-two legislators who signed the above document, we find the names of Messrs. Abraham, Barnes, Brace, Burt, Clynes, honest Will Crooks, Arthur Henderson, Lansbury, Ramsay Macdonald, Snowden, John Ward, etc.

It would be interesting to know if these short-sighted and misguided gentlemen are now at all ashamed of themselves, and of their treatment of Lord Roberts;

and if they realize that it was largely owing to their stupidity and arrogant assumption of military knowledge that the country was caught unprepared for a great war, with all the consequences arising therefrom.

One of the most incorrigible—and, I think history will record, most blameworthy—of the opponents of Lord Roberts and the N.S.L. was Lord Haldane, who, although he professed to know more about Germany and her intentions than any of his colleagues, deliberately reduced our tiny army, abolished the militia, and set to work tinkering in a thoroughly amateurish manner with his Territorials, who were only to begin their serious six months' training after war had been declared! And when Lord Roberts repeatedly told him that troops ought to be trained during peace-time, in readiness for war, he said he knew better, and went on to say that, although Lord Roberts might have been a successful leader of troops in the field, he (Lord Haldane) knew better how to organize an army. Here are his words. Speaking at a Territorial prize-giving at Bradford (one wonders what the Territorials had done to earn prizes), Lord Haldane said: "Lord Roberts had commanded troops with unbroken success, but the leading of troops was one thing, and the business of organizing for war in times of peace was another."

So we find a successful lawyer claiming to know more about the organization of an army than a veteran Field-Marshal and successful General! And, what is more, the country entrusted this unabashed amateur with the job. *Punch* called him Napoleon Haldane, and drew flattering pictures of him, after Meissonier, with his cocked hat athwart-ships and his legs wide apart.

Our British Carnot lost neither time nor opportunity in showing his countrymen—including Lord Roberts—

how thoroughly he understood the organization of an army, and the necessary preparations for war. In one of his numerous speeches in praise of his own work—Ipswich, May 13th, 1911—he said:

"No financial apprehension need be felt by the Territorial Associations. The War Office" (meaning himself) "was an indulgent parent to all its deserving children. The defence scheme was nearly complete, and, he believed, was the most perfect possible. A great army of Reserves and Boy Scouts would play an important part in the military problem which was being pieced together. The great silent courage of the British people had contributed to the success of the Territorial Force."

The great silent courage of the British people! A great army of Reserves and Boy Scouts!

And yet there was nothing in the report of this speech to show that Lord Haldane was not perfectly sober and quite in earnest!

And how did our British Carnot set about appealing to the great silent courage of the British people, in order to piece together the military problem? Thus:

"The Territorial week at Kingston-on-Thames, held for the purpose of bringing the local companies of the 6th East Surrey (Territorial) Regiment up to full strength, was concluded on Saturday with a special recruiting night at headquarters" (then follow some statistics). "Ladies wearing recruiting favours of tricolour rosettes have been very active in the cause, the authorities offering each lady a pair of gloves for each recruit enlisted. On the morning of Saturday a fox-terrier paraded the streets with a recruiting badge affixed to its collar, and all district Territorials displayed tricolour ribbons on their bicycles; each member of the regiment obtaining a recruit receiving a monetary reward."

And yet the great silent courage of the British people failed, by thirty-two men, to furnish the required quota for the East Surrey Regiment.

England expects every man to do his duty. And if he won't, the Minister for War will send a lady to kiss him and a fox-terrier to entice him.

Our great organizer of victory said, on another occasion, that " he knew the considerations that moved many public-spirited people towards compulsory service. His comment was that they did not know what they were driving at, and that, if they did know it, many of them would be the first to drop the object they had set in view."

We rather thought we did know what we were driving at, and that Lord Haldane didn't. We never had any intention of dropping the object we had in view, and many of us have lived—though, alas! not our wise leader—to see compulsory national service become the law of the land.

In the same speech (made at the Caxton Hall on November 24th, 1913, less than nine months before the crash) Lord Haldane went on to say: " There might also come a time when, instead of having to spend seventy or eighty millions on defence, they would be able to devote *the greater part of it*" (my italics) " to social reform, which was much needed, and other things."

What a far-sighted statesman! " Social reform and other things " are the well-known euphemisms for promises of bribery to ignorant voters, in order to keep Radical political lawyers in power and office.

But enough of Lord Haldane. We must charitably suppose that he knew less about his spiritual home than he pretended to do. He has not, however, confessed

his folly, nor shown any signs of being ashamed of himself.

The National Service League had plenty of other opponents besides the Minister for War. Thus, Mr. F. D. Acland, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, made the following savage attack on our honoured President: "Lord Roberts not only stated that Germany wanted to strike at us, but he said something worse—that we ought to be in a position to strike at Germany (cries of 'Shame!'), and to smash them in a time of profound peace and without any cause. It was nothing less than a wicked proposal (cheers)."

While our so-called statesmen were saying these things and doing their best to reduce England's powers of self-defence to the lowest possible ebb, it must be remembered that they had had ample and repeated warnings that Germany intended to attack us as soon as she was ready and saw a good opportunity of doing so. I do not mean secret warnings from Consuls and Ambassadors—about which I know nothing—but public warnings, known to all the world.

Out of scores of such warnings which I could quote, I will give two, as being typical of the spirit and ambitions of the German nation.

As long ago as 1900, the late General Von der Goltz wrote:

"The national energy of Germany has need of space, and the soil of our country has become insufficient. The dream of a greater Germany has become a law for the present generation under the iron hand of necessity. . . . War with England has nothing improbable about it. . . . Violence is a right for people who fear for their existence. . . . Germany can meet the trial when it comes, and must not lose a single day in preparing for it." Which she didn't.

On our part, we set about preparing for it by reducing our little army by 30,000 men and cutting down our battleship programme, the money being wanted for "other things." Thus, in 1905 England laid down four capital ships and Germany laid down two. In 1906 England laid down three, and Germany three. In 1907 England three, Germany three. In 1908 the Mistress of the Seas reduced to two, and Germany increased four. And in this same year we received another of the numerous warnings to which I have alluded above. The *Neue Politische Correspondenze* of Berlin (March, 1908) wrote:

"We have no reason to fear England, if we have one day to resort to the *ultima ratio regum*. The spirits and bodies of Englishmen have lost their former value by reason of the decline of military virtues. . . . England has enveloped us in diplomatic toils which begin to interfere with our liberty of action. A desire may overcome us to break these toils with a vigorous hand, before we are so enclosed by them that we can no longer stir. . . . It may be reserved for the conquerors of Alsen" (where the great bully jumped on poor little Denmark) "to execute a century later the plan abandoned by Napoleon in 1805."

King Edward VII. had been frequently accused of enveloping Germany in diplomatic toils, because he made friends with France. Fortunately for us, that wise monarch could see a little farther ahead than his purblind and stupid Ministers.

While enumerating the various opponents which the National Service League had to encounter, I must not forget the Quakers. Being myself a direct descendant from a family of Quakers, I shall take the liberty of speaking with some freedom, and with the zeal of a

renegade, on the subject of the patriotism of this amiable Society of Friends, who have a conscientious objection to defend the country they live in; though they have none whatever to enjoy the freedom and security and all other benefits won for them by the blood of their fellow-countrymen.

It is on record in my family that my great-grandfather, a wealthy timber-merchant in the city of Cork, was "read out of meeting"—*i.e.*, expelled from the Society—because he had a picture-gallery in his house, including a beautiful Venus in the classical attire of one diaphanous cloud; he also drove four-in-hand; but the most heinous of his crimes, and what was probably the last straw, was that he had eight little brass cannon in his yacht! These are still preserved in the family, to show that we are impenitent.

In 1906, when Lord Roberts and the N.S.L. were working hard to arouse the country to the danger of being unprepared for war, the Quakers did their best to frustrate our efforts. A representative meeting of the Society, held in London in March of that year, passed the following resolution:

"This representative meeting of the Society of Friends feels that it must at once express its conviction that any such attempt" (national service) "to instil the military spirit into the boys and youths of our country is antagonistic to the high moral ends which national education should have in view."

The high moral end of teaching boys to cultivate a conscience which will forbid them, when they arrive at man's estate, to undertake an imperative national duty; forbid them to behave like men; forbid them to take any steps which might enable them to defend

successfully the life and honour of their mothers and sisters. It is difficult to see where the morality comes in; and when I am told that I ought to respect the honest convictions of my fellow-countrymen, I reply that they have no right to be my fellow-countrymen; that they have no right to enjoy a freedom and security which they will not help to defend. I tell them that the thing they call their conscience is a dishonest sham, unless they are prepared to pack up their traps and leave the country immediately, and go to some country—*if they can find one*—where they will enjoy freedom and security without risking their own skins in defence thereof.

The above-quoted Quaker view of the "high moral ends" of education was expressed in 1906, when the country was enjoying the blessings of peace. But what shall be said of the following manifesto by the same society, issued ten years later, when the country had been at war for more than a year, engaged in a struggle for its life?

The following letter was sent to members of the Cabinet and to all members of the House of Commons on January 4th, 1916:

"Compulsory Military Service.

"On behalf of the committee of the Society of Friends specially appointed to have charge of this matter, we write to inform you that, if any measure having the above for its object should become law, the opposition of our Society to it will in no sense be modified or withdrawn. Such opposition is fundamental, and is based upon a conscientious objection to all warfare. We are further to inform you that if any such measure should become law the support and co-operation of

members of the Society *will be available for those outside their own body* (my italics) whose conscientious objection is based upon the same ground as their own.

" Signed on behalf of the committee,

EDWARD GRUBB,
JOAN MARY FRY,
ROBERT O. MENNELL."

So we see that if, during the throes of a great war, the Parliament of Great Britain should deem it necessary for the safety of the country to pass a certain law, these sanctimonious hypocrites, who profess to be more righteous than their fellow-countrymen, not only threaten to break the law themselves, but inform the Cabinet and the legislature that they will aid and abet anybody else who wishes to break the law, though not of their Society.

If this is not treason, it would be interesting to hear some suitable name for it.

It is all very well to say, " Oh, these people are only crazy Quakers, and nobody minds what the Quakers say. Leave 'em alone, and don't make martyrs of them."

I don't agree to this. I see no reason why a Quaker or a Shaker or any other British subject should be allowed to defy with impunity the law of the land he lives and flourishes in, and also offer his support to any would-be law-breaker who can manage to manufacture a convenient conscience for the purpose. I might just as well trump up a conscience against paying my taxes.

There were many other people, besides those I have mentioned, who offered strenuous opposition to the labours of the National Service League; but in spite of all opponents we worked away steadily, though in

vain, to awaken our masters, the voters, to the danger they were running in remaining unprepared to meet the onslaught of the great bully of Europe, which we clearly foresaw to be inevitable.

I shall probably be told that it is very easy to be wise after the event; but I can say with a clear conscience (not a Quaker one) that in almost every speech I made for the N.S.L.—and I made a good many—I made the German menace the groundwork of my remarks. In doing this I followed the lead of that great, clear-sighted, single-minded soldier who, for eight years at least, never entertained a doubt that Germany would strike directly her preparations were completed. "Germany strikes when Germany's hour has struck," said he. For which wise and timely warning some of the members of our enlightened legislature actually had the impertinence to apologize to the would-be assassin!

I started a branch of the National Service League at Folkestone in 1905, and it increased and flourished up to the outbreak of the war; when we turned our organization on to recruiting on the voluntary system, though still holding our opinion that universal military training was the only just and equitable method of preparing for national defence. I also placed my services at the disposal of the headquarters of the N.S.L., and they sent me all over England speechifying in favour of national service. It was extremely difficult to get the working classes to come to our meetings or to take any interest in the subject. It was obvious that they preferred the voluntary plan, as it allowed them to shirk all duty to the State. So it turned out that the various meetings which I addressed, north, south, east, and west, were almost entirely composed of

what are called the well-to-do classes. Sometimes the audience would be quite enthusiastic on the subject, and cheer vociferously, and at other meetings they would be cold and indifferent, and apparently disappointed with the entertainment—as if they expected me to sing a nautical song and dance a hornpipe. But even at the meetings where the audience appeared to be heartily in favour of universal service, we did not always get many of them to join the League. They would smile and say that they thought national service would be a very good thing for all young men; but they would not join the League "at present." Or, like Felix, they would hear me at a more convenient season.

And now, after boasting of all the work I did to assist Lord Roberts in his crusade, I must, in common honesty, relate an event which is not much to the credit of my perspicacity: for I was fairly taken in and fooled by a wily Teuton. In 1904—four years after the promulgation of the first German Navy Law—I received a very friendly and courteous letter from the editor of the *Deutsche Revue*, asking me to write an article for him on the relations between Germany and England. He would undertake the translation of the article, and I would have no further trouble, beyond writing it in English and receiving payment for it. The editor (Mr. Richard Fleischer) was extremely polite; I was, "Your Excellency; Sir Fitzgerald; The Right Honourable," etc.; and he only published articles by people of "the highest standing." I ought to have smelt a rat; but I didn't, and fell incontinently into the trap.

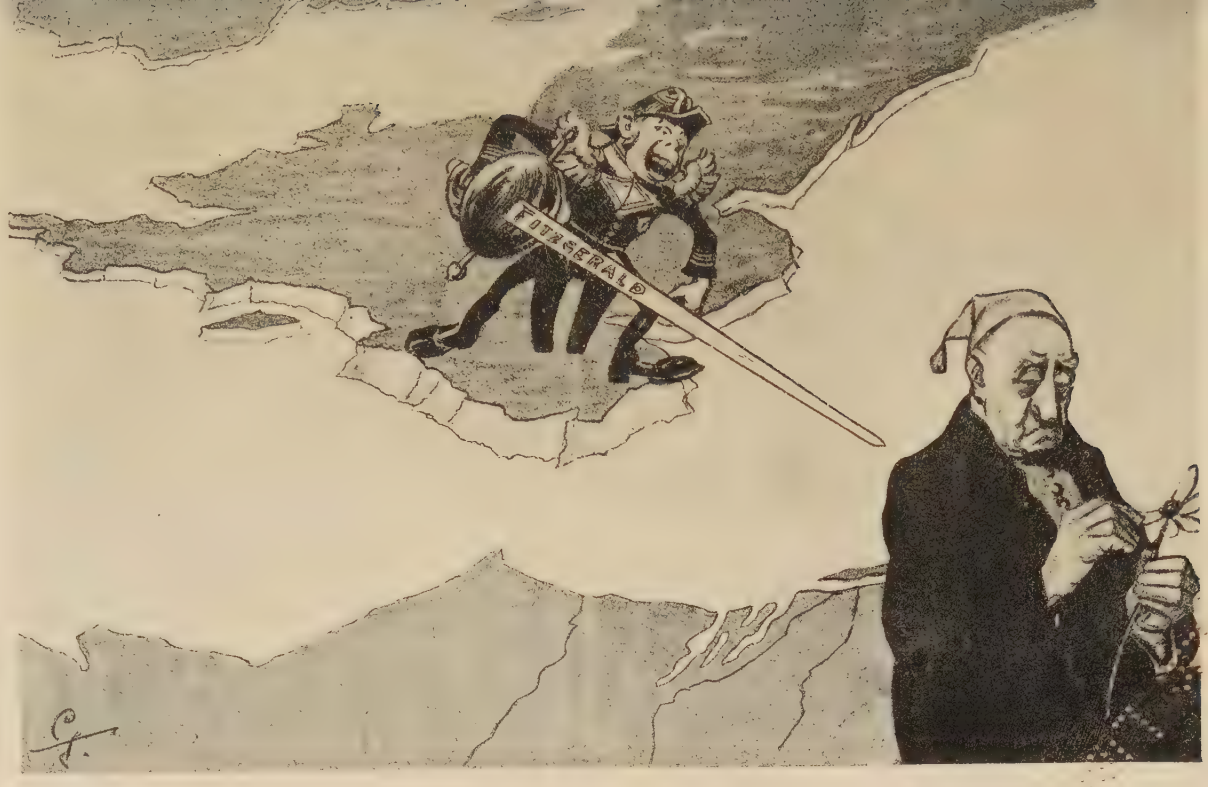
So I wrote what I thought was a friendly and moderate article, but at the same time pointing out frankly that the preamble to the first German Navy Law (1900) could scarcely be regarded otherwise than as a challenge

to this country for the mastery of the seas; and that we had for years felt that our very life and existence as an independent Power rested upon our naval supremacy; and, further, that the Kaiser's famous remark, "Neptune's trident must be in our fist," seemed to me to leave but little doubt as to Germany's ultimate object. And I wound up by saying that, if this really was her object, I would rather see war come to-morrow than wait until the German Fleet approached ours in equality.

This was exactly what the wily editor wanted and was playing for. The German Press took the matter up and screamed with rage and fury. I was a bloodthirsty, swashbuckler Admiral. I was suggesting that a base and treacherous attack should be made upon poor dear innocent Germany in a time of profound peace, and before she was ready.* One of the German comic papers published a caricature of me, gnashing my teeth, and with a pen couched as a lance, striking an innocent, unsuspecting German in the back. The German Navy League was delighted and demanded an immediate increase in the programme for Dreadnoughts, which they got; while Great Britain steadily decreased her programme of shipbuilding, and Mr. Churchill went whining for a naval holiday, as we wanted to maintain our naval supremacy on the cheap.

As I do not understand the German language, I am unable to say whether the editor of the *Deutsche Revue* made a fair and honest translation of my article; but as he certainly cheated me with regard to the object of his request that I should write an article for him,

* Many of our own newspapers scolded me roundly for making such a wicked and "unprovoked" suggestion. Though a few—including the *Army and Navy Gazette*—supported me.



PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR FROM THE GERMAN JOURNAL *ULK*.

MICHEL: "Blut ist dicker als wasser—ist nicht dicker—ist dicker—ist nicht—ist"——
ADMIRAL FITZGERALD: "Das wollen wir mal sehen."

I shall probably be doing him no injustice if I suspect him of dishonesty in the translation.

It is well known that, in translating one language into another, it is easy—without making an absolute misstatement—to give a turn to a phrase which shall convey a different meaning to that intended by the author of it. There are many words which have no exact equivalent in another language; and we ourselves borrow largely from the French tongue in order to express ideas and sentiments for which we have no words in our own.

To use a popular modern expression, I was "had," badly "had," by the editor of the *Deutsche Revue*. I fell into his trap; and I have no doubt my innocent frankness, or, more properly, my indiscretion in trusting a German, may quite possibly have helped my old friend Tirpitz to get more money for his Dreadnoughts. My only excuse is that in 1904 the Germans had not been found out, though they were under suspicion, and I gave them the benefit of the doubt.

And now my task is finished. In the two volumes I have written I have tried to give the reader some idea of life in the Navy during the latter half of the nineteenth century, in the piping times of naval peace. Someone else must write of the War—when it is finished—and that will be more interesting.

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